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A COURSE OF
LECTURES
ON THE
PROPHECIES

THAT REMAIN TO BE FULFILLED.

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BY ELHANAN WINCHESTER.

VOL. IV.

BEING A SUPPLEMENT TO THE FORMER VOLUMES.

CONTAINING

Instances and Examples in Favor of the Doctrine of
THE UNIVERSAL RESTORATION.

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LECTURE XXXIII.

The Prophecies of the Return of the
CAPTIVITY OF SODOM AND HER DAUGHTERS,
SAMARIA AND HER DAUGHTERS, AND
JERUSALEM AND HER DAUGHTERS, *considered;*

And the Doctrine of the
GENERAL RESTORATION

Deduced therefrom, in Opposition to both

ENDLESS DAMNATION,

AND

ANNIHILATION.

I HAVE more than once in the course of these Lectures touched upon those prophecies that speak of the Restoration of Sodom and her daughters, Samaria and her daughters, and Jerusalem and her daughters. But as this subject is very important and interesting, and has not been much treated of, and as I gave you reason to expect a Lecture upon it in particular, I shall now endeavour to perform what I promised.

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The glorious prophecies of these joyful events are found in Ezekiel chap. xvi. from ver. 53 to 63, or to the end of the chapter: Some brief remarks upon these eleven verses will be sufficient for the present discourse.

But before I come to speak of the return of the captivity of Sodom, &c. it will be proper to enquire whether Sodom is used figuratively, or literally: for much depends upon this.

We find in the foregoing parts of the chapter, that God brings to the remembrance of Jerusalem, (by which the whole tribe of Judah was intended) First, her forlorn, helpless, and deplorable estate in the beginning of her existence as a people. from ver. 1—5. Second, his love and pity towards her in that low condition, and the great things that he did for her. ver. 6—12. Third, her great beauty, glory and prosperity in consequence of his goodness towards her. ver. 13, 14. Fourth, her dreadful apostacy from him, called by the name of adultery, from ver. 15—34. Fifth, then follows the most terrible threatenings of destruction and utter desolation for her abominable crimes, from ver. 35—41.

The first gleam of grace that appears, like the sun shining through a dark cloud, is in ver. 42, where these words of hope and comfort appear:

“So will I make my fury towards thee to rest, and
“my jealousy shall depart from thee, and I will be
“quiet, and will be no more angry.”

Words cannot more expressly shew that God's displeasure even towards the most rebellious is not
always

always to continue, but shall cease and be no more, when once it has accomplished the divine purpose.

In ver. 43, the reasons are given why Jerusalem should be thus severely punished; she is threatened with severe judgments, even to have her way recompensed upon her own head: and the design of all is to bring her to cease from her lewdness.

In ver. 44, 45. She is compared to those nations that formerly dwelt in the adjacent country, as the Hittites and Amorites, and she is considered as much like them, as the daughter might be supposed like the father and mother.

In the 46th verse, Samaria and Sodom with the daughters are brought to view, and upon comparison, Jerusalem is found far more blame worthy than either of them.

“And thine elder sister is Samaria, she and her daughters, that dwell at thy left hand: and thy younger sister that dwelleth at thy right hand, is Sodom and her daughters.”—ver. 46.

Samaria, and her daughters, evidently intend the ten tribes, who had been destroyed, and carried captive more than a century before, and their situation is described as being at the left hand of Jerusalem, or upon the north side of the possession of the tribe of Judah. Samaria may be called the elder sister of Jerusalem, partly because she proceeded from the same original stock as herself; and partly in reference to Sodom, who was cut off and destroyed while she was young in existence, in comparison of Sama-

ria, who was spared for many years, even several centuries, after she had greatly corrupted her ways before God. Sodom is described as having been situated at the right hand of Jerusalem; and her daughters, the cities of the plain, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Zoar, were situated round about her, in a most fertile land, well watered as the garden of JEHOVAH, see Gen. xiii.—10.

In ver. 47, 48. Jerusalem is expressly declared to have corrupted her ways far more than either of her sisters, or their daughters. Sodom is particularly mentioned, because her destruction had been so exceeding dreadful and exemplary, her sins are exactly described, and her destruction hinted, ver. 48, 49, 50. “As I live, saith Adonai JEHOVAH, Sodom
 “thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as
 “thou hast done, thou and thy daughters. Behold
 “this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride,
 “fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in
 “her and in her daughters, neither did she strength-
 “en the hand of the poor and the needy. And they
 “were haughty, and committed abomination be-
 “fore me, therefore took I them away, as I saw
 “good.”

That Sodom is here really intended, is evident from the mention of *abomination*, which is that horrid crime which derives its name from *Sodom*, and which in particular drew down such an exemplary punishment as brimstone and fire from Heaven, upon the cities of the plain; by which dreadful visitation God

took

took them away in a sudden and most awful manner, as he *saw good*. And by the expressions of their being taken away for the abomination which they committed before JEHOVAH, even as he *saw good*, we are further confirmed in the meaning of the words *Sodom and her daughters*. For what other people were ever taken away in such a manner, and set forth for an example to those who should afterwards live ungodly? Those cities, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, were condemned with an overthrow, and set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

It is plain that the real inhabitants of Samaria, and the cities of Israel, the inhabitants of Sodom, and the cities of the plain, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, are spoken of in this chapter. Sodom had ~~been~~ destroyed in the days of Abraham, who interceded for its salvation; and who beheld the smoke of its burning, and commanded his household to fear before God, who destroyed the cities of the plain in such a dreadful manner. Now as Abraham was the great Progenitor of the nations of Israel and Judah, and had warned his posterity from the destruction of Sodom, which he saw, to fear the Lord, and to avoid evil: therefore the example of Sodom is mentioned with great propriety. Samaria had been but lately destroyed in comparison of Sodom. The destruction of these two peoples should have warned Jerusalem not to transgress, but she despised the admonition,

and committed iniquities more and greater than both her sisters; and was therefore threatened with certain ruin and desolation, which was soon after fulfilled. And except JEHOVAH of Hosts had left them a very small remnant, they had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrah: as the prophet Isaiah expresses it. chap i. 9. But Jeremiah seems to represent the calamities of Jerusalem as more terrible than the ruin of Sodom. “The punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed on her.” Lam. iv. 6. And whoever considers the united horrors of war, famine, pestilence, fire, &c. which Jerusalem experienced in her first destruction, as described by Jeremiah; and more especially in the dreadful scene of desolation at her second total destruction, described by Josephus, who was an eye witness: will be ready to judge that the prophet was not far out of the way in his expression. For as the sins of Jerusalem were more and greater than those of Sodom, so she certainly deserved a greater punishment, and as God threatened to do by her as she had done, there can be no doubt but she received the due reward of her crimes.

But the subject of this Lecture is to prove that as Samaria, Sodom and Jerusalem were grievous sinners, and great sufferers, so God’s goodness and mercy shall reach them in their most deplorable state, and shall bring them again from the land of the enemy, and redeem them from their destructions.

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The exposition which I shall give you, properly begins from the 53 verse of this chapter. “When
“I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity
“of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of
“Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again
“the captivity of thy captives in the midst of
“them.”

When I was inquiring first into the evidence of Universal Restoration, the latter part of this chapter struck my mind very forcibly; for if the sinners of Sodom, Samaria and Jerusalem, who were cut off for their abominations, and perished in their iniquities, and are the captives of sin, death, hell, and the devil, shall have their long and dreadful captivity returned, why shall not all mankind be also brought back again to a state of innocence and happiness, and restored to the Divine favour?

But when I came to look into the works of some famous expositors, to see their sense of these words, I was amazed to behold the boldness of some, and the darkness of others in their explanations. The first I looked into upon the subject was the continuation of Mr. Poole's Annotations, and the authors are so rash as to represent God mocking and jesting instead of promising in these words. They understand the sentence ironically as though God had said, *When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, which I never will, and the captivity of Samaria, and her daughters, which shall never be returned, then will I*
bring

bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them. But as the former shall never come to pass, so also the latter shall never take place. How could men suspect that the God of truth would intimate in such a solemn manner that when he should accomplish two wonderful things, he would perform a third no less marvellous, when he never intended to do either? Such trifling would hardly become a wise and good man, much less a wise, powerful and good God. But if there was any kind of uncertainty in these words, (which there is not that I can discern) yet the promise being repeated in another form in ver. 60, 61, 62, 63. would entirely remove all doubt or hesitation. For there it is expressly declared that God, notwithstanding all the sins of Jerusalem, (so much greater than those of Sodom) will remember his covenant with her in the days of her youth, and will establish unto her a new and everlasting covenant, and that she shall receive her sisters, both Samaria and Sodom, for daughters, and that God shall be pacified towards her for all that she hath done. So that it is impossible that words should be more *positive*, or promises more express.

The captivity of Sodom and her daughters shall be returned, the captivity of Samaria and her daughters shall be brought again, and the captivity of the captives of Jerusalem shall be brought again in the midst of them. I understand the whole seriously as a glorious prophecy of what shall take place after the day of judgment, and shall consider it in that light:

if any person is able to give a clear consistent explanation of this whole prophecy in any other view, I stand ready to receive it, but till then I must retain what I trust I have received from the Word of God.

What prevents this prophecy from being accommodated to any event this side of the day of judgment, is the express promise of the captivity of *Sodom* being brought again, whereas the inhabitants of that city, and her daughters, the cities of the plain, were all destroyed by fire and brimstone from Heaven, none escaped. They are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of *aionion*, or eternal fire, and seem to be reserved to the day of judgment to be farther punished, and, according to our Saviour's own words, shall be then condemned; for, *if it shall be more tolerable for the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than it shall be for the inhabitants of Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum, and the other cities where the mighty works of Jesus were done, it certainly is plainly implied, that the inhabitants of the land of Sodom shall be judged, condemned and punished, at and after the day of judgment, as well as the inhabitants of those cities where our Saviour's mighty works were wrought, though with a lighter or more tolerable punishment.* See Gen. xix. 24, 25. Jude 7. 2 Pet. ii. 6—9. St. Matt. x. 15. xi. 20—24. St. Luke x. 12—15.

And, therefore, however possible it might be to explain the bringing again of the captivity of Samaria and Jerusalem, to mean the return of their descendants

descendants to dwell again in the land of Israel and Judah, yet as Sodom, which was entirely destroyed, both country and inhabitants, is included in this most gracious promise, and as the captives of both Samaria and Jerusalem are to be brought again in the same manner, and all joined together in one covenant, and Jerusalem is to receive the others as daughters, we are obliged to understand the whole prophecy of their return in this chapter as a glorious display of grace that shall take place after the day of judgment, and the ages of punishment are past.

In other prophecies the return of the descendants of both Israel and Judah to dwell in the land which God gave to their fathers, is clearly promised, and shall, doubtless, be performed in the latter days. But what are those promises to the thousands and millions that have been destroyed in their sins? But if the prophecy in this chapter speaks of the return and deliverance of those who seem past all hope of recovery, how very glorious must such an idea be! and how important those predictions appear that otherwise seem to have little or no meaning in them!

Having thus cleared the way a little, I think that I may safely proclaim and publish to the world, by Divine authority, that the captivity of Sodom and her daughters shall be brought again, by that same God who took them away for their sins and abominations, as he saw good: Samaria and her daughters, whose inhabitants were mostly destroyed by the sword of the
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the king of Assyria, shall also be brought back from the dreadful state of sin, misery, pain, woe and death, wherein they have remained during such long and dreadful periods. For though Ephraim is severely threatened by God with total destruction, yet he graciously promises a final and everlasting deliverance to them, saying, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; (or hell.) I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, (or hell,) I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." Hosea xiii. 14.

And at the same time shall Jerusalem, who was more wicked than her sisters, be also restored, and her captives brought back in the midst of the others; and she shall be as a mother unto them; and they shall be as dear to her and tenderly beloved as daughters, in that glorious return of their captivity.

Verse 54. "That thou mayest bear thine own shame, and mayest be confounded in all that thou hast done, in that thou art a comfort unto them."

It is here represented that the conduct of Jerusalem had been so much worse than that of Sodom and Samaria, that she had been a comfort to them, and had justified them in all that they had done. She is threatened, therefore, that she shall bear her own shame in proportion to her crimes, and to all her iniquities, not only because of the multitude and greatness of her sins, but because she had justified her sisters by her conduct, though she had severely judged and condemned them in words. The remembrance

membrance of this folly shall serve greatly to humble Jerusalem, even after the return of her captivity, and for ever prevent her from glorying in herself, or over her sisters; being thus wholly cured of her pride and vanity, she shall receive and embrace her sisters in the kindest arms of affection, being filled with as much shame and confusion at the remembrance of her crimes, as can consist with a state of entire reconciliation, and perfect happiness.

Verse 55. "When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate:"

The same thing is promised here in other words as was in ver. 53. viz. their compleat restoration to a state of innocence and happiness, being entirely delivered from sin, misery and death, and brought into their first state of perfection, beauty and glory, no more to be defiled for ever by sin, or hurt by misery. If it be objected that the former estate of Sodom, Samaria, and Jerusalem, was not a state of innocence and happiness, but on the contrary a state of sin and misery; I answer, that all the creation was beautiful, and free from every kind of evil, as it came out of the hands of a God of infinite wisdom, power and goodness; and the same is true of *all*, that was said of the King of *Tyrus*, "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." Chap. xxviii. 15.

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And when iniquity shall be no longer found in men, then shall they be again perfect in their ways; and thus they shall return to their former, or first estate. Then shall the morning stars again sing together, and all the sons of God shall shout for joy, as at first; see Job xxxviii. 7. and the whole creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. See Rom. viii. 21. If it be therefore acknowledged that the state in which intelligences were first created was good, yea, very good, then a return to their former estate, implies a return to goodness and blessedness. And this return seems evidently foretold respecting the vilest of sinners. And if this be true, how does it magnify the wisdom and goodness of God in the most amazing manner! Well may it be said upon this view, *that God is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works*, since even those poor miserable wretches whom every one would be ready to conclude in a forlorn, hopeless state, and wholly lost without remedy, are still remembered by their kind and great Creator, and shall, by his infinite mercy, in Christ Jesus our Lord, be brought back again to their first estate.

Ver 56. "For thy sister Sodom was not mentioned by thy mouth in the day of thy pride."

Here Jerusalem is blamed for her pride and haughtiness, and high conceit of herself, in that she scorned even to mention the name of her sister Sodom in
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the day of her pride; though in reality she was so much worse than Sodom, that her sister might have been ashamed to be owned by her. Yet Jerusalem despised her that was more righteous, or less wicked than herself, and would not think of that dreadful destruction that came upon Sodom for fewer crimes than those of which she herself was guilty, and refused to be warned by so sad an example.

And is not this the case with many sinners in this world, who affect to be righteous themselves, and despise those who are gone down to the regions of darkness, and who are suffering severely for less crimes than their despisers are daily committing, who yet seem to forget that their turn must come, to suffer in proportion to their transgressions, unless they repent? The dead and lost are forgotten by their friends and companions, in a short time, but God remembers all his creatures, and has their interest at heart, even when he punishes them for their transgressions.

Ver. 57. "Before thy wickedness was discovered as at the time of thy reproach of the daughters of Syria and all that are round about her, the daughters of the Philistines who despise thee round about." While her wickedness was kept hid and concealed she highly esteemed herself, and was looked upon with veneration by the nations round about: but when her iniquity broke forth, she appeared viler than Sodom, and was as much despised by

by them, as she had despised the most miserable inhabitants of those cities which were destroyed by fire from Heaven. *Sin is a reproach to any people*; and they that commit it must come to be despised, sooner or later; they who despise others are generally more worthy to be despised themselves, for concealed sin is extremely hurtful to the breast where it is harboured, and the more so because such persons conceive and retain a good opinion of themselves, and are well thought of and much esteemed by others; whereas if their real character was known, they would be despised by mankind, and that might have a happy tendency to destroy their own pride and self conceit.

Ver. 58. "Thou hast borne thy lewdness, and
"thine abominations saith JEHOVAH."

That is, as certainly as thou hast committed lewdness and abominations, so thou shalt bear thine iniquity, or the punishment of thy lewdness and all thine abominations.

Ver. 59. "For thus saith Adonai JEHOVAH; I
"will even deal with thee as thou hast done, which
"hast despised the oath in breaking the covenant."

Here is God's severe threatening to deal with his faithless and perfidious people as they had done by him. Their crimes were of the most dreadful nature, in despising the sacred oath, and breaking the covenant of their God, by which they had avouched the Lord to be their God, and were truly married to him, and he therein had avouched them to be his people, and was married to them: and it was a far greater crime for Jerusalem to break the marriage

covenant with God, by idolatry, and other sinful abominations, than for a wife to break the marriage covenant with her husband, by adultery; even as God is greater and better than man. If adultery deserves to be punished with death, how much sorer punishment did Jerusalem deserve for her wicked abominations, by which she alienated the mind of God from her, and caused him to put her away? God threatens to judge and punish her as women that break wedlock and shed blood, or commit murder, are judged, and to give her blood to drink, and to recompense her evil way upon her own head. This cannot be fully done in this life, since, as has been observed already, even simple adultery is worthy of death, what then must adultery against the great JEHOVAH, or idolatry deserve? A punishment millions of times greater, and which consequently cannot be endured in this life; so that the very nature of the crime teaches us to look beyond the death of the body for the accomplishment of the threatening, *I will even deal with thee as thou hast done.*

Ver 60. “Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant.” This glorious promise proves beyond contradiction, that the greatest crimes may be punished as they deserve, and yet room may be left for the exercise of mercy; which could not be the case if punishment was absolutely endless.

It is plain that God threatens to punish Jerusalem as she deserved, and to do to her as she had done

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in despising the oath, and breaking the covenant; and it is also evident, that no calamities that may be endured in this life can possibly be adequate to such dreadful crimes, and therefore their punishment must be chiefly in another life: and yet to this same people God says, '*Nevertheless, notwithstanding all your sins and provocations, and although I will deal with you exactly according to your ways, yet I will after all remember the covenant which I made with thee in the days of thy youth, in the wilderness of Sinai, and not only so, but I will receive thee again in an everlasting covenant, that shall never be forgotten; which covenant shall be established and confirmed for ever, and thou shalt never more depart from me, and there shall be no more a breach between us.*' Now if this is the evident sense of the passage, then it is a settled point that the greatest punishments that can be inflicted upon the greatest transgressors, are perfectly consistent with designs of mercy towards them, and with the greatest kindness that can be conceived. Thus God reconciles what to most men appears impossible, *strict justice with boundless mercy*, and both may according to the divine plan, take full effect upon the same persons. The person is the same, "I will even deal with *thee* as *thou* hast done, &c; "nevertheless I will remember my covenant with " *thee* in the days of thy youth, and will establish unto *thee* an everlasting covenant." All this (however inconsistent with the systems of men) is spoken to the same people, and shall all be

completely fulfilled. Both wrath and mercy shall have their full place in the same persons; first wrath for a season, and then mercy for ever.

Ver. 61. "Then thou shalt remember thy ways,
 "and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger, and I will
 "givethem unto thee for daughters; but not by thy
 "covenant."

In these words it is declared that Jerusalem shall receive her sisters, Samaria, and Sodom, as daughters, in the same new covenant in which she shall receive her Maker as her husband. At the same time that God gives himself to Jerusalem, as a Father, Friend, and Lord, he shall give Samaria and Sodom to her as daughters in the new covenant, and she shall receive them in the kindest arms of love and affection; and if this does not imply the final restoration of Samaria and Sodom, as well as Jerusalem, then I cannot tell what it can mean. But as this is the plain sense of the words, I shall follow it, without regarding what the opinions of men may be concerning the matter. In the midst of all this joy, it is again repeated, that even then Jerusalem shall remember her ways and be ashamed, and shall not be able to forgive herself even when her Lord shall receive her again, and when she shall receive her sisters. Those who are restored after this life, shall experience the same kind of shame, only to a greater degree that those feel who receive the manifestation of the Divine forgiveness in time; they who now know
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their sins forgiven, blush and are ashamed and confounded at the remembrance of their transgressions; and the more they are assured of pardon, the more unable they are to forgive themselves, for sinning against so kind and good a God. Now as it is a fact that this kind of shame is perfectly consistent with very great degrees of happiness, joy and comfort, there can be no doubt but it will be the portion of those who shall be restored hereafter, as well as those who receive forgiveness in this world. The remembrance of their evil ways must make them greatly ashamed, to think how much they have sinned against the God of grace and boundless love.

Ver. 62. "And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am JEHOVAH." It is here again repeated that God will establish his covenant with Jerusalem restored, even the new and everlasting covenant, which shall never be broken: there shall thenceforth be no more lapse or falling away for ever; these redeemed ones, though formerly they were the greatest sinners, yet from that time when God shall return their captivity, they shall for ever cleave to him, as the steel dust to the loadstone, and forsake him no more. *And thou shalt know that I am Jehovah.* This knowledge is eternal life, and this is what God promises to give to those who had been the greatest transgressors. I have often observed that this, or some similar expression, closes most of the dreadful threatenings in this prophecy; which shews that the greatest mercies are intended to succeed the most terrible judgments, and that the

greatest rebels are punished with a view to their humiliation and restoration; to bring them to know, and consequently to fear and love the glorious JEHOVAH.

Ver. 63. "That thou mayest remember and be
 " confounded, and never open thy mouth any more
 " because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward
 " thee for all that thou hast done, saith Adonai JE-
 " hovah."

How often these words are repeated in the latter part of this chapter, after the promises of grace begin to appear in the 42 verse! *Bear thine own shame, yea, be thou confounded also, and bear thy shame; that thou mayest bear thine own shame, and mayest be confounded in all that thou hast done; then thou shalt remember thy ways and be ashamed, &c. That thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, &c.* This shame and confusion of face is to take place when JEHOVAH, shall be pacified towards Jerusalem for all that she hath done. So that it is evident that this shame is perfectly consistent with a state of favour and acceptance with God, and with a state of peace and happiness.

I have now briefly gone through the exposition of the eleven last verses of this chapter, and if the sense which I have given is true, and agreeable to the connexion of the words, this prophecy is highly important indeed, and lays a firm foundation for many conclusions of great consequence, some of which I will mention, as a proper close to this Lecture.

1. *Endless*

1. *Endless Damnation* cannot be true if we understand the prophecy aright; for Sodom was cut off, and is set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, and yet God promises to bring her captivity again. No instance could possibly be chosen more to the purpose than this of Sodom; for no other rational explanation can be given, that I can see. There is here no room for evasion. That Sodom was wholly destroyed, both land and inhabitants, is a well known fact; none escaped, but Lot and his two daughters, who were only sojourners there, and were of the kindred of Abraham. Now if these inhabitants of Sodom, who for their abominations were destroyed by fire and brimstone from Heaven, shall be restored and brought again, then there may be hope for all the lost. And especially since a people much more wicked than Sodom, shall be joined in the same blessing, even the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Whom God shall receive in an everlasting covenant, and will be pacified towards them for all that they have done.

2. Equally evident it is that *Final and Entire Destruction*, or *Annihilation* is not the design of God; since if any of the human race were to be for ever destroyed, we should expect the inhabitants of Sodom to be among the number. They were destroyed in a most dreadful manner by fire from Heaven, and the Scriptures often speak of their destruction; and yet God promises to continue them in existence, and give them to Jerusalem for daughters, and bring

again their captivity ; consequently all the threatenings of utter destruction found in the sacred volume, are to be understood in such a manner, as to be consistent with the restoration of those who are destroyed. *Sodom was destroyed utterly ; Sodom's captivity shall be brought again ; therefore, Sodom shall not be annihilated.*

3. We may conclude that if Sodom and Samaria, and even Jerusalem, whose wickedness was far superior to theirs, shall be restored ; certainly all the human race. I hope none will say that this is a rash conclusion ! These nations seem to be set forth for examples, as the vilest of mankind, whose sins were very great, and their punishments the most severe and exemplary. Now if God restores the vilest, who can doubt his gracious designs towards the rest ? O the wonderful love and goodness of God to the most unworthy objects ! His thoughts are not our thoughts, nor our ways his ways ; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his thoughts above our thoughts, and his ways above our ways. His mercy lasts for a thousand ages, and far exceeds his wrath. An end shall come to his displeasure, even towards the greatest sinners, whom indeed he will first severely punish, and then will make his *fury towards them to rest*, and his *jealousy to depart from them*, and *will be quiet*, and *will be no more angry*.

4. Nations, as well as individuals shall retain their identity, and personal and national characters, even in the day of judgment, and afterwards ; Sodom and

and her daughters, and Samaria and her daughters, shall be given to Jerusalem for daughters in the joyful day of their restoration.

5. God punishes with a direct design to humble subdue and reclaim; this is the key which opens all the dark scenes, and brings light out of obscurity, and justifies the severest dispensations of God in the punishments which he inflicts. And notwithstanding that he will deal with sinners as they have done, yet will he remember mercy for them, and will be pacified towards them for all that they have done. Thus the severest judgments, and the greatest mercies, may not only be dispensed by the same God, as all allow, but may be both exercised towards the same persons: as is evident by the whole of this prophecy.

6. It is no uncommon case for persons who are esteemed righteous by others, and who have a very good opinion of themselves, to despise and judge others with great severity, who are less guilty in the sight of God than themselves.

7. It is very common for sinners that are alive to vaunt it over those who are dead, or else to be unmindful of them; not considering that in a little time they may come into the same situation as their companions in sin who are gone before. And this criminal conduct is the more encouraged on the account of the prevalence of that unworthy sentiment, that *God cannot help the dead, nor ever have mercy upon the damned*, which is clearly confuted by this prophecy.

phesy. God can bring thee, O sinner, into the same situation with the most miserable of the dead; and he can restore the most unhappy among them to rest and peace. Therefore do not open thy mouth to glory over them; nor rashly pronounce their deliverance impossible; but leave them to the mercy and compassion of their Maker, and take warning and repent, lest thou shouldest come into the same state of torment.

8 All sinners shall be brought to shame and confusion of face for their transgressions, even when God is pacified towards them; but with this difference, they who confess and forsake their sins here, and walk in the ways of God during their lives, shall only be ashamed for a little season, but in the world, or age to come, they shall not be ashamed nor confounded to eternal ages; See Isaiah xlv. 17.

But all those who have been incensed against JEHOVAH, and have continued in rebellion against him during life, shall be ashamed and confounded hereafter; their everlasting confusion; shall never be forgotten; See Isaiah, xlv. 24. Jer. xx. 11.

And even when God shall forgive them, and be pacified toward them for all that they have done, they shall be filled with shame and confusion of face at the remembrance of their ways.

9. By all this we see that the finally redeemed shall be made up of two great divisions at last; those who *shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end, who shall never be ashamed*; and those who shall
bear

bear their shame, remember and be confounded, and never open their mouth any more because of their shame; when God is reconciled to them, or pacified toward them for all that they have done. Yet this shame and confusion of face is as perfectly consistent with that kind of happiness which they shall receive after they are reclaimed from their evil ways, and truly humbled, as the glory honour and dignity of the first class are with that exalted felicity in which they shall be placed. Thus they shall differ, one shall shine like the sun in the kingdom of their father, and the other shall stand in the glory of the moon. I see a beauty in this divine order, which I cannot express: but hope what I have said will throw some light on this prophecy, and give you to see the beauty and propriety of the *Universal Restoration*, as it stands revealed in the Scriptures of Truth. How infinitely superior this system is to the doctrine of *Annihilation*, which supposes the Deity will utterly destroy out of existence a considerable part of his creatures, and thereby will confess that he was not able to reclaim them! Oh what a most gloomy thought it is, that God should give existence to so many millions of intelligences, naturally capable of glorifying and enjoying their Creator; and yet should be obliged at last to destroy them entirely! O gloomy melancholy thought! may it never invade my breast! I trust it never will until my ideas of God are materially changed.

I now

I now believe that he is infinitely wise, powerful and good; that his counsel shall stand, and that he will do all his pleasure; and that he created intelligences to glorify and enjoy him their great and glorious Creator; and I see no reason to fear but he will bring them so to do.

But if the doctrine of *Annihilation* is so gloomy, with what unknown and inconceivable horror is the doctrine of *Endless Misery* fraught! How dreadful the thought that God should punish his creatures to all eternity without having the least design for their good or happiness! Can a wise and good God punish for no purpose, but merely to satisfy what they call *vindictive justice*, which they say can never be satisfied to all eternity? *Endless misery* seems to reflect upon the character of God, and for that very reason I cannot believe it to be true. It is also hard with respect to man; for instance, what wise man would not by far have preferred, (could it have been put to his choice) never to have had an existence, rather than to have stood an equal chance of being endlessly happy, or endlessly miserable? How much more so in the present state of human nature, when the chance seems more than ten to one against happiness!

Now can it be supposed that an infinitely wise and good God, would create intelligences that he foresaw would be *endlessly miserable*? More dreadful still is the idea which some have, that he created them on purpose that they might sin, and be miserable to all eternity.

But

But blessed be God, we are not obliged to receive either of these disgraceful systems as the plan of an all-wise and gracious Father. One plan remains in which no absurdity appears, that of the *Universal Restoration*, in which both wisdom, power, goodness, grace, justice, mercy and truth meet, and harmonize. In this scriptural system, the sinner is punished; sin is destroyed, and the creature is restored. God is glorified, his character is cleared from all shadow of injustice, he is pleased with his creatures, and they are pleased with him. All is peace and reconciliation according to this view. And blessed be God, this glorious system naturally appears in the prophecy that we have been considering, as well as in many other parts of Scripture.

The three plans that have been mentioned, viz. *Annihilation*, *Endless Damnation*, and the *Universal Restoration*, are all that can possibly be thought of, and there is something to be said for each: each hath its warm advocates; only one *can be true*, and one *must be true*; for God must necessarily have some design respecting his creature man, and that design whatever it be, must be at last fulfilled.

I leave all to judge for themselves, but for my own part, I must declare that the evidence of the *General Restoration* is to me so strong as quite to overbalance all that seems to appear against it.

This doctrine, if true, is certainly infinitely worthy of God, is both just, reasonable and good; is
such

such as all good men would wish, both for the honour of God, and the happiness of all mankind.

The truth of it has been in some good measure demonstrated already, in this and some of the former Lectures, and will be more fully attempted in those that are to follow. This prophecy of Ezekiel is infinitely important upon this view, but in any other light appears to me wholly inexplicable. Truth is what I seek with all my heart, and a consciousness of this enables me to support and bear up under all the opposition I meet with, on account of my sentiments respecting the final state of mankind. I leave what has been now said to your serious and candid consideration; may the Lord bless us all with his grace here, that we may rejoice hereafter, and never be ashamed nor confounded, world without end.

END OF LECTURE XXXIII.

LECTURE

LECTURE XXXIV.

The unsearchable Counsels of GOD in shutting up the Jews together in Unbelief, that he might have Mercy upon all, set forth; by which many Scriptures, otherwise very hard to be understood, become perfectly plain and easy.

TO vindicate the ways of God to man, and to explain the sacred volume in such a manner as to convince gainfayers, and stop the mouth of infidelity, are designs of such infinite importance and utility, as ought to engage the friends of Divine Revelation to step forth for these purposes; to the honour of the great Creator, and the welfare of mankind.

If I know my own heart, this has been my desire in the Course of Lectures, which I have had the pleasure thus far of delivering to you in this place. And if it may please God to make what I have said of use to any in these respects, I shall rejoice that ever I engaged in this delightful employ.

The

The Lecture which I shall now deliver, is designed to clear up one of the greatest apparent difficulties in the sacred book, and to explain some of the hardest passages, by comparing scripture with scripture. The difficulty which I hope to obviate at this time, is, that dark and mysterious part of the divine counsels, by which God shut up the Jews in unbelief, blinded their eyes, stopt their ears, hardened their hearts, as though he would hinder them from seeing, hearing, and understanding, and being converted; and thus prevent them from being saved. I shall first quote those passages in which these or similar expressions are found, by which the grand difficulty will appear; and then I shall endeavour to clear it up, and I hope to satisfaction.

The first passage wherein this language is found is Isaiah vi. 9, 10. “And he said, Go, and tell this
“ people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and
“ see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart
“ of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and
“ shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and
“ hear with their ears, and understand with their
“ heart, and convert, and be healed.”

To this dark and difficult passage our Lord alludes, St. Matt. xiii. 13, 14, 15. “Therefore
“ speak I to them in parables: because they seeing,
“ see not; and hearing, they hear not, neither do
“ they understand. And in them is fulfilled the
“ prophecy of Esaias which saith, By hearing ye
“ shall hear, and shall not understand: and seeing
“ ye

“ ye shall see, and shall not perceive; for this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.”

St. Mark iv. 11, 12. “ And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without all these things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.”

St. Luke viii. 10. “ And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.”

And the Evangelist St. John makes this observation upon our Saviour’s ministry and miracles, and the infidelity of the Jews, and the reasons of it. (chap. xii. 38, 39, 40, 41.) “ But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

Vol. IV. D “ He

“ He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their
 “ heart: that they should not see with their eyes, nor
 “ understand with their heart, and be converted, and
 “ I should heal them. These things said Esaias
 “ when he saw his glory, and spake of him.”

And the Apostle St. Paul said to the Jews, (Acts
 xxviii. 25, 26, 27.) “ Well spake the Holy Ghost
 “ by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go
 “ unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear,
 “ and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see,
 “ and shall not perceive. For the heart of this
 “ people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of
 “ hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they
 “ should see with their eyes, and hear with their
 “ ears, and understand with their heart, and should
 “ be converted, and I should heal them.”

These passages are so apparently inconsistent with
 the goodness and universal benevolencé of God, and
 his tender mercies which are over all his works, and
 the kindness, love, pity and compassion of our dear
 Saviour, that a key that will unlock the difficulties
 must be desirable in the highest degree, and can
 hardly fail of being acceptable to the serious en-
 quiring mind. Who that has ability, and sees the
 consequence of having this mystery opened, would
 not be willing to trace the globe around to obtain
 satisfaction in this important point? but we need
 not go far to have it cleared up; the whole may be
 unravelled by a careful attention to what the Scrip-
 tures teach respecting the subject.

I shall

I shall not attempt to solve this difficulty in the only way that some would do, by referring it entirely to the sovereign will and good pleasure of God, who has a right to do with and dispose of all his creatures, as seemeth good in his sight. This may be sufficient where extraordinary favours and blessings are granted to any people or persons above what they have any reason to expect. In those cases the question, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?* is a sufficient answer to all cavils. But in judicial acts there must be some cause or reason to justify the divine procedure, and hence God always acts justly and wisely in all his judgments; and though he is not obliged to give any account of the reasons of his conduct towards his creatures, yet as he acts with design, he generally informs us what his designs are, and why he doth so and so, and especially in all his judgments and corrections inflicted upon men.

The amazing blindness, deafness, hardness of heart, insensibility, stubbornness, and infidelity of the Jewish nation, was certainly judicial, and came upon them for certain purposes, which I shall now proceed to mention.

First, It is necessary to vindicate the justice and equity of this procedure; and blessed be God, this is easily done; and is so plain that it must satisfy all serious enquirers. The Jews were naturally a very stubborn, disobedient and stiff necked people, and had resisted all the methods of God's goodness, by

which he sought to reclaim them; and therefore as they had wilfully rebelled, and refused to hearken to him, he might justly give them up, in a judicial manner, to hardness of heart, and blindness of mind, and stubbornness of will, as an awful punishment for their criminal rebellion, and wilful disobedience.

This was the case with them under the former dispensation, when they resisted the counsel of God, and his will made known to them by the ministry of Moses and the Prophets; as we are informed in a great number of passages, of which the following are a specimen.

Psal. lxxxi. 8—16. “Hear, O my people;
“and I will testify unto thee: O Israel if thou wilt
“hearken unto me; there shall no strange God be
“in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange
“God. I am JEHOVAH, thy God who brought
“thee out of the land of Egypt; open thy mouth
“wide, and I will fill it. But my people would
“not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none
“of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts
“lust: and they walked in their own counsels. O
“that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel
“had walked in my ways! I should soon have sub-
“dued their enemies, and turned my hand against
“their adversaries. The haters of JEHOVAH should
“have submitted unto him, but their time should
“have endured for ever. He should have fed
“them also with the finest of the wheat, and with
“honey

“honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.”

See also Isai. xlvi. 17, 18, 19. “Thus saith JEHOVAH thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am JEHOVAH thy God, who teacheth thee to profit, who leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go. O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea: Thy seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring of thy bowels as the gravel thereof; his name should not have been cut off, nor destroyed from before me.”

In these most beautiful and affectionate expressions, God informs Israel what blessings would have followed them if they had obeyed his voice, among which he tells them that they should never have been cast off, that *their time should have endured for ever*, and that *their name should not have been cut off, nor destroyed from before him*. But because they would not hearken to his voice, and would have none of him, *therefore he gave them up to their own hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsels*.

This is also further declared by the same prophet Isaiah, in chap. lxiii. 10. “But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.”

The Prophecies are full of such like expressions. God by Ezekiel declares saying, “Because they

“ had not executed my judgments, but had despised
 “ my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths, and
 “ their eyes were after their fathers idols. Where-
 “ fore I gave them also statutes that were not good,
 “ and judgments whereby they should not live.
 “ And I polluted them in their own gifts, in that
 “ they caused to pass through the fire all that open-
 “ eth the womb, that I might make them desolate,
 “ to the end that they might know that I am JE-
 “ HOVAH.” Ezek. xx. 24, 25, 26.

It is a fearful thing to be given up to commit
 wickedness; yet this was the very case with Israel,
 and it was on the account of their numerous
 and aggravated wilful transgressions against God.
 This is remarked by St. Stephen in his defence,
 in these words, “ This is that Moses who said
 “ unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the
 “ Lord your God raise up unto you of your bre-
 “ thren like unto me, him shall ye hear. This is he
 “ that was with the Church in the wilderness, with
 “ the angel who spake to him in the Mount Sinai,
 “ and with our fathers; who received the lively
 “ oracles to give unto us: To whom our fathers
 “ would not obey, but thrust him from them, and
 “ in their hearts turned back again into Egypt; say-
 “ ing unto Aaron, Make us Gods to go before us;
 “ for as for this man Moses, who brought us out of
 “ the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of
 “ him. And they made a calf in those days, and
 “ offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the
 “ works

“ works of their own hands. Then God turned, and
 “ gave them up to worship the host of Heaven : as
 “ it is written in the book of the Prophets, O ye
 “ house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts
 “ and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the
 “ wilderness ! Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of
 “ Molech, and the star of your God Remphan,
 “ figures which ye made to worship them, &c.
 Acts vii. 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43.

This account of the Israelites being given up to idolatry and wicked practices, because of their sins and provocations against God, is perfectly similar to the account which St. Paul gives of the depravity and wickedness of the Gentile world, to which the nations of the earth were given up in consequence of their abusing their knowledge, and perverting the truth of God already made known to them.

See Rom. i. 21,—31. “ Because that when they
 “ knew God, they glorified him not as God, nei-
 “ ther were thankful, but became vain in their ima-
 “ ginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.
 “ Professing themselves to be wise, they became
 “ fools. And changed the glory of the uncorrupti-
 “ ble God into an image made like to corruptible
 “ man, and to birds, and four footed beasts, and
 “ creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them
 “ up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own
 “ hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between
 “ themselves: Who changed the truth of God into
 “ a lie, and worshipped and served the creature

“more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever.
 “Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto
 “vile affections, &c.” then there is mentioned the
 dreadful unnatural crimes to which they were given
 up, as a punishment for their idolatry, &c. by which
 filthy crimes they received in themselves that *recom-
 pence of their error which was meet.* “And even as
 “they did not like to retain God in their know-
 “ledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind,
 “to do those things which are not convenient: be-
 “ing filled with all unrighteousness, fornication,
 “wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of
 “envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whis-
 “perers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful,
 “proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobe-
 “dient to parents, without understanding, covenant
 “breakers, without natural affection, implacable,
 “unmerciful.”

This horrid list of all sorts of crimes they were
 given up to commit, because of their wilfully turn-
 ing away from God, and abusing that knowledge and
 light which he had given them. And oh what a
 dreadful punishment it is to be given up to our own
 hearts lusts, to fill up the measure of iniquities, and
 thus treasure up wrath against the day of wrath!

By all that has been said we may clear the Divine
 justice in giving up those to blindness of mind and
 obduracy of heart, who wilfully refuse to hearken
 to his voice.

Thus

Thus the Jews were blinded, and the gospel was taken from them, because, in addition to all their other most heinous sins, they not only rejected the ministry of our Saviour, but also put him to death; nor was this all, but afterwards, when his death and resurrection were preached to them, and salvation proclaimed in his name, confirmed by mighty signs and wonders, they refused to hearken, and confirmed themselves in wilful unbelief; and opposed and blasphemed, and trampled the word of God under foot, and rejected his counsel; and were therefore finally given up to total infidelity, and abandoned from that day to this, to hardness of heart, and blindness of mind, and stubbornness of will, above all the nations of the world, among whom they are scattered; and are a warning and example to all people not to rebel against God, nor refuse to obey his Gospel.

The history of their rejection, and the cause of it, is briefly related in the Acts of the Apostles, in the following manner.

When Paul and Barnabas came to Antioch, they went into the synagogue of the Jews, and after the reading of the law and the prophets, they were invited to give the people a word of exhortation, if they had any thing to say. Upon which St. Paul took the opportunity, and preached a most convincing, faithful, and powerful discourse, proving Jesus to be the true Messiah, and that salvation was alone to be obtained in his name. But being no doubt greatly

greatly pressed in spirit, and filled with an ardent desire for their conversion, and fearing, and perhaps foreseeing that they would reject the Gospel, he concluded his sermon with a most awful and solemn warning, in these words: "Beware therefore lest
" that come upon you which is spoken of in the
" prophets, Behold ye despisers, and wonder and
" perish, for I will work a work in your days, a
" work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a
" man declare it unto you." Acts xiii. 40, 41.

" And the next Sabbath-day came almost the
" whole city together to hear the word of God.
" But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were
" filled with envy, and spake against those things
" which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and
" blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed
" bold, and said, It was necessary that the word
" of God should first have been spoken to you; but
" seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves un-
" worthy of everlasting life, lo we turn to the Gen-
" tiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, say-
" ing, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles,
" that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends
" of the earth." Ver. 44, 45, 46, 47.

Afterwards in the city of Corinth, " Paul was
" pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews that
" Jesus was Christ. And when they opposed them-
" selves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and
" said unto them: Your blood be upon your own
" heads; I am clean; from henceforth I will go to
" the

“the Gentiles.” Chap. xviii. 5, 6. The Jews about and after this time began in all parts generally to reject the Gospel. Christ himself appeared to St. Paul in Jerusalem, in a trance, and said unto him, “Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem; for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me.”

And though he would fain have had liberty to stay in the city, and preach Christ to those who had known him to be a persecutor, yet in this he was not heard; but Jesus said to him, “Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.” Chap. xxii. 18—21.

Yet still Paul was greatly desirous of the salvation of his brethren, and when he was brought prisoner to Rome, he called for the Jews, and as they desired to hear what he thought, they appointed a day, and came to his lodgings, and “he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the Prophets, from morning till evening.” And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, which was the before cited passage out of Isaiah’s prophecy; and concluded by saying. “Be it known therefore unto you that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.” See chap. xxviii. 17—29.

Thus was the kingdom of God taken from the Jews, and given to the Gentiles. And the
Apostle

Apostle Paul writing to the Thessalonians, takes occasion to mention the Jews, and their lost and deplorable state in these words: "Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men; Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway, for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost." 1 Thes. ii. 15, 16.

Therefore considering all their sins, and especially their wilful rejection of the Gospel, and their rooted malice and hatred to God's way of salvation through Jesus Christ, God was just and righteous in sending them "strong delusion that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thes. ii. 11, 12.

And thus they were condemned, because they hated the light, and loved darkness rather than the light of life, because their deeds were evil. Thus the justice of God is fairly cleared, even though no other account could be given, of the blindness and rejection of the Jews.

Secondly. This awful event, the blinding and rejection of the Jews, fulfils the truth of God contained in the sacred Scriptures; and this itself is of the highest importance both for the glory of God, and the welfare of mankind. Both Moses and all the Prophets speak of this people as the most stubborn

born and rebellious of all the nations and people of the earth : and they prophesied of their unbelief, and rejection for a long season. Our Saviour represents the generation in which he lived as more faithless than any of the heathen : far more obstinately wicked than Sodom, and Gomorrah, Tyre, and Sidon, and testifies that the evidence which they resisted would have convinced, reformed, and preserved, Sodom itself, as also Tyre and Sidon : and foretells that the men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with that generation, and shall condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonas, while a greater than Jonas, even the Lord and Saviour himself, both preached and wrought miracles among the Jews with but little effect. Therefore he foretold their utter rejection, and dispersion into all the world, and the total destruction of their temple and city, and that their land should be for many ages trodden under foot of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled.

Therefore the blinding and rejection of the Jews was an event foreseen, and foretold by God, and was done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled ; that the words spoken by Moses, David, by Isaiah and all the prophets, by Christ himself and his Apostles, might be accomplished. And considered in this light, this event was of great consequence, after it had been thus solemnly and frequently predicted. The very existence of Christianity depended upon it, and the faith of mankind must have failed unless it had taken place

place. The existence of the Jews as a distinct people, scattered and dispersed through all the world, banished from their native country; cast out as accursed from God, and despised by men, blinded and hardened in sin, and unbelief, are such evidences of the truth of the sacred Scriptures, as never can be overthrown or resisted. And thus the truth of God is confirmed by this dark and gloomy event. This consideration is enough to justify the divine procedure towards them, even if nothing else should be found in the sacred writings to cast further light upon it. But God's ways are very wonderful, and in all his dispensations both wisdom and goodness shine, as well as power. And it may be further observed, that in all the works of God that we are acquainted with, there are various designs, some of which perhaps appear plain, on the surface as it were, while others lie deeper and more obscure; and perhaps the chief purpose of all may lie hidden, and be hardly discoverable, except by very close attention, and diligent application. It is the same with this event of which I am now treating: it is in itself dark, but we have been able already to discover two designs therein, and each sufficient to justify the same; but I shall notice two others, in which the divine goodness beams forth with astonishing brightness and glory, which we could never have discovered unless they had been particularly revealed.

But in order to do justice to the astonishing subjects that lie before me, I must beg your attention, while

I read

I read to your consideration, and make some observations upon part of St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, viz. the eleventh chapter, wherein these matters are thoroughly handled, with great beauty and force of argument, accompanied with many excellent remarks, which at once are calculated to warn, instruct, please, and edify.

A brief Comment upon the Eleventh Chapter of St. PAUL's Epistle to the Romans.

Ver. 1. " I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin."

In the foregoing verses, the Apostle had been speaking of the disobedience of Israel, and of the calling of the Gentiles; but lest any should carry the matter too far, and suppose that God had wholly cast away, and entirely rejected his ancient people the Israelites, he puts in a caveat against such a conclusion, and for the present, instances himself, who was undoubtedly a true Israelite, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, and descended from the tribe of Benjamin; which was a circumstance in which he might have gloried according to the flesh, and which he mentions in Phil. iii. 5. This was a tribe that adhered to the service of God, and had not turned
ed

ed aside to idolatry and rebellion with the tribes of Israel. But he had learned to count all those distinctions as nothing, or as loss for Christ, and only mentions this circumstance here to prove his point, that God had not cast away all his people.

Ver. 2, 3, 4, 5. " God hath not cast away his
 " people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the
 " Scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh interces-
 " sion to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they
 " have killed thy Prophets, and digged down thine
 " altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my
 " life. But what saith the answer of God unto him?
 " I have reserved unto myself seven thousand men
 " who have not bowed the knee to the image of
 " Baal. Even so then at this present time also,
 " there is a remnant according to the election of
 " grace.

In these words it is intimated, that a remnant even in the worst of times shall be preserved from falling by the grace and favour of God, and that this remnant, though unknown to men, is known and approved of God; and this number is often much larger than good men are aware of. Elias, that great prophet, thought himself alone in Israel, not only as a prophet, but as a worshipper of the true God, but God informed him of seven thousand men, whom he had reserved to himself. So that we should learn not to judge too censoriously, but rather say with the Apostle, when great errors prevailed, " Nevertheless
 " the foundation of God standeth sure, having this
 " seal

“ seal the Lord knoweth them that are his ; and, let
 “ every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart
 “ from iniquity.” 2 Tim. ii. 19. But people are
 very apt, when they have been once or twice de-
 ceived in men, or have seen some fall away, to think
 and say that there are none good and upright, but
 all have gone aside ; but God will always have some
 chosen and faithful souls, who shall be a seed to serve
 him, even in times of the most general defection :
 and these he foreknew, chose, called, and preserved
 for that purpose ; and though the world knoweth
 them not, and they may be unknown to each other,
 yet God beholds them, approves of their persons,
 characters, and ways, and hath reserved them to
 himself, as a peculiar people, as the Psalmist expresses
 it, “ But know that JEHOVAH hath set apart him that
 “ is godly for himself ;” Psal. iv. 3. These are
 God’s hidden ones, whom he is preparing for high-
 est glories hereafter. These are the salt of the earth,
 and the light of the world, a chosen race, in the
 midst of a crooked generation : such the Apostle
 declared existed in his time, even among the Jews,
 and were *a remnant according to the election of grace.*

Ver. 6. “ And if by grace, then it is no more of
 “ works ; otherwise grace is no more grace, but
 “ if it be of works, then it is no more grace : other-
 “ wise work is no more work.”

God the sovereign of the world, has a right, as I
 observed before, to dispense his favours or bounties
 according to his good pleasure ; and in this respect

he deals variously towards his creatures, by placing them in circumstances, widely differing one from the other, not according to their works already done, but according to his own free favour and grace; the good pleasure of his will moving him so to do. But though he does not choose men for their works already done, yet I dare not go so far as to say, that God has no reason for his choice, and that he has no regard to his fore-knowledge, or foresight of the manner in which they will conduct themselves; because the contrary is intimated in the case of Abraham, whom God chose to make known his purposes unto, and gives this as the reason, saying, “ Shall
 “ I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and
 “ mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth
 “ shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that
 “ he will command his children, and his household
 “ after him, and they shall keep the way of JEHO-
 “ VAH, to do justice and judgment; that JEHO-
 “ VAH may bring upon Abraham that which he
 “ hath spoken of him.” Gen. xviii. 17, 18, 19.

And though the children of Israel, as a nation, were not chosen for their numbers, or their remarkable goodness, yet there were such reasons for the choice as justified the wisdom, truth and goodness of God, as well as his sovereign grace, or free favour. For thus Moses expresses himself upon the subject,
 “ And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he
 “ chose their seed after them, &c. Deut. iv. 37.

“ For

“ For thou art a holy people unto JEHOVAH thy
 “ God; JEHOVAH thy God hath chosen thee to be a
 “ special people unto himself, above all people that
 “ are upon the face of the earth. JEHOVAH did
 “ not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because
 “ ye were more in number than any people: for
 “ ye were the fewest of all people. But because
 “ JEHOVAH loved you, and because he would keep
 “ the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers,”
 “ &c. Chap. vii. 6, 7, 8.

And as God had reasons for choosing Israel as a peculiar people, so he had sufficient reasons for casting them off as a nation, and yet reserving a small remnant of his own free favour and grace, to be vessels of his peculiar mercy.

The doctrine of election, as it stands in the Scripture, is a glorious link in the chain of the divine purposes of grace towards mankind, and is so far from being inconsistent with the love and favour of God, towards all, and the *General Restoration*, that it evidently implies the certainty of the same: as I have shewn in my Sermon, called, *The Gospel preached by the Apostles, and especially St. Paul*; and will be farther proved in this Lecture.

I have taken some pains upon this matter, and have examined the Scriptures, and compared what they say respecting election, and the result of my enquiries I will present to you in the following conclusions.

1. That God hath freely chosen nations, families and particular persons, for certain purposes.
2. That God hath chosen some from the beginning, whose names are said to be written in the book of life from the foundation of the world.
3. That they are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God, who sees in what manner they will receive and improve his grace; and they are certainly chosen that they should be holy, and be fruitful in every good work.
4. That they are not so infallibly secured to glory by being thus chosen, but what it is possible for them to fall short, and fail of the grace of God; and therefore are exhorted to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure, that they may never fall, and to hold fast what they have received, that no man take their crown.
5. That they are chosen to be a kind of first fruits of God's creatures, not for the exclusion of mankind in general, but contrariwise, to shew that all shall be certainly brought in at last. The elect are chosen as vessels of mercy, and that God might make known to them that great mystery of his will, viz, that he hath purposed to bring all in at last, and also that they might be conformed in the highest manner to the image of Jesus, and be greatly useful to their fellow creatures.
- 6 This election, though it does not appear certainly and absolutely, infallibly to secure them from the second death, yet it places them in a state of
high

high favour, and endows them with many great privileges, by which they have an opportunity of being abundantly useful and happy; and this is entirely of grace, and not on account of any works done by them before they are thus chosen, though there is no doubt but God sees reason for choosing them in preference to others, which reason he sometimes makes known, and sometimes conceals.

7. It appears to me, that the Lord has in view to prepare a certain number for his kingdom, his designs are to raise them to the highest state of perfection attainable by human nature, and to prepare them to be kings and priests to God; and when that limited number shall be ready for their glory, the Lord will come with them and take possession of his kingdom. And if some of these fall short during this their state of trial, others shall be brought in, until the number is compleat.

These are my present views of election, as it stands in the Scripture, and to me the doctrine in this light appears reasonable, and very glorious. I have opened my mind freely, and without reserve upon the subject. Whoever is able to shew me a more scriptural, rational and excellent plan of this doctrine, shall have my hearty thanks. In the mean time we will pursue our subject.

Ver. 7, 8. "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded; According as it is written, God hath given them the

“ spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see,
 “ and ears that they should not hear, unto this day.”

Righteousness is what Israel followed after, which they did not attain; and the reason was, because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law; for they stumbled at Christ Jesus, the stumbling stone, which God had laid in Zion, as a foundation for the children of men to build upon. See Chap. ix. 31, 32, 33.

The *election* and the *rest* are here distinguished; some obtained, and the others did not obtain, but on the contrary were blinded, in a judicial manner, as we have already considered. The fact is here again asserted by the Apostle, as before by the prophet, that God had given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, even unto that day, and we may add, *even unto this day*; so long and dreadful is the period of their blindness, deafness, and dead sleep. For even unto this day, the vail is upon their heart, whenever Moses and the Prophets are read; But when they shall be turned to the Lord the vail shall be taken away. See 2 Cor. iii. 14, 15, 16.

Ver. 9, 10. “ And David saith, Let their table
 “ be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling
 “ block, and a recompense unto them. Let their
 “ eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and
 “ bow down their back alway.”

The words of David, are taken out of Psalm lxix, and were spoken prophetically of the people who procured the crucifixion of our Lord, and who gave him
 him

him gall for his meat, and in his thirst gave him vinegar to drink; and are therefore evidently spoken of the unbelieving Jews, who were blinded &c. The words of David, seem more terrible than those of any prophet, as may be seen in the abovementioned Psalm, unless they should be rendered in the indicative mood future tense, instead of the imperative mood; and then they are only a terrible prophecy, that *their table shall become a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompense unto them; that their eyes shall be darkened, that they shall not see, and their back alway, or continually bowed down.* For the word *alway*, must not be understood absolutely *endless*, but as it is expressed in the psalm, *continually*. But if we even understand these dreadful words as solemn and awful imprecations, pronounced by the spirit of prophecy against those wicked ones, yet, if we should be so happy as to find them ending in a glorious display of divine grace, the difficulty will vanish at once, Let us proceed, and we shall behold with pleasure, how *light* rises out of *obscurity*, and *darkness*, becomes like *noon-day*.

Ver. 11. "I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy."

Weak, ignorant and narrow minded men might be ready to answer in the affirmative, that they had been blinded for no other purpose than their endless ruin, and were made to stumble merely that they might

fall, and falling perish, and be destroyed to all eternity; and that God could have no other design in view in their fall, but their perdition. But the Apostle rejects such an unworthy thought with horror, and cries, *God forbid!* the Father of Mercies had other and more glorious designs in view in their stumbling, than that they should fall.

I have mentioned some already, and now proceed, Thirdly, to set forth another glorious purpose of God, in the blinding and rejection of the Jews, in which the divine goodness to mankind manifests itself in a wonderful manner; and which is expressed by St. Paul in these words: *But rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles.* What light this casts upon that subject that at first appeared so dark! Oh how infinite the goodness of God, to make the fall of the majority of one nation, the salvation of a multitude of nations! *Lo we turn to the Gentiles! and from henceforth I will go to the Gentiles;* and, *Be it known therefore unto you that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will bear it;* were fearful sayings to the Jews, but joyful tidings to the Gentiles; and were uttered in consequence of the refusal and opposition, and consequent rejection of the natural seed of Israel. And therefore considering the infinite good that has come to us Gentiles, through the perverseness, blindness, and casting away of the nation of the Jews, we have reason to praise God for his great goodness to us, made known through that event. So the darkness begins to give
way

way to the light; and justice, truth, wisdom, and goodness shine in the amazing plan. Who could have imagined that such great blessings to mankind were hidden in such a dark cloud as the rejection of the Jews, if God had not revealed the same? The Jews being filled with *envy*, at seeing the multitudes of Gentiles flock to the Gospel, was one of the reasons of their opposing, contradicting and blaspheming, and consequently of their being cut off, and rejected. And the Apostle seemed to hope that the Jews seeing the happy state of the Gentiles under the Gospel dispensation, would be provoked to jealousy, and would return to the Lord, and come to be partakers of the same grace, and share in those blessings which through unbelief they had lost.

Ver. 12. "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world; and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles: how much more their fulness."

Here the Apostle beautifully intimates that the Jews should be restored to their fulness again, and that the Gentiles would be very far from having any reason to repine at such a change in their favour: for although the world had derived great benefits from their fall and diminishing, yet blessings far more and greater should be gained by their happy recovery.

The argument is very strong, striking, and much to the purpose, and is more beautiful than can well be imagined. As the fall and diminishing of the Jews had been the riches of the Gentile nations, the
Apostle

Apostle rightly judged that they might fear that if the Jews should be restored, they might be thereby deprived of the blessing: this the Apostle confutes, by shewing them that the restoration of the Jews to their fulness, should be infinitely more to the advantage of the Gentiles than their diminishing: and therefore we have every reason to hope, wish and pray for their restoration, were it only for the immense gain it will be to the world at large; even in proportion as the recovery of the Jews will be a more glorious event than their rejection.

Ver. 13, 14. "For I speak to you Gentiles, in as much as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them."

Though St. Paul was himself a Jew, and had an exceeding great love for his nation, yet his business lay chiefly among the Gentiles, to whom he was in a special manner an Apostle, called, chosen, and sent by Christ to them, for their salvation; and therefore since he possessed that high office, he thought he had a right to speak to them freely, as though they had been his children; authoritatively, since God had invested him with great power over them, for their edification; and therefore magnified his office by fulfilling it in all respects, and behaving with proper dignity therein. And it was not only for the advantage and salvation of the Gentiles, that he thought it incumbent on him thus to speak and act, but he did so, if possible

possible, to provoke the Jews to a noble emulation of the faith and obedience of the Gentiles, that thereby some of them might be saved; and especially when they beheld what respect the Gentiles shewed to one of their nation, and what power, influence and authority he had gained over them, by seeking their welfare.

Ver. 15. "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world: what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?"

Here the Apostle continues the same argument as he had handled in ver. 12, but in other words, that by presenting the same thing in different views, he might not only prove and confirm the recovery of the Jews, but also shew the Gentiles the very great interest they had in so joyful an event; and thereby encourage them both to believe and rejoice in the prospect of its accomplishment. The *casting away of the Jews* was the *reconciling of the world*; by their rejecting the Gospel it came to be preached unto the Gentiles at large, and thus they who were far off were brought nigh, and they who were at enmity were reconciled, and became fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God: and were no longer considered as aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, nor strangers to the covenant of promise, but were the adopted children of the Most High. But *what shall the receiving of the nation of Israel be?* What glorious blessings shall come to the world at large thereby? Benefits too big for expression,

sion, and such as common similitudes would fail to describe; and therefore the expression of *life from the dead*, is used by the Apostle, as alone in any measure adequate to convey an idea of the important event, and the joy and happiness which the Gentiles shall derive therefrom. The coming in of the Jews, will be both to themselves, and to the world at large, like a resurrection from the dead: so sudden, glorious and wonderful will be the change, and so visible and joyful its effects.

Ver 16. "For if the first fruit be holy, the lump
"is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the
"branches."

Under the ceremonial dispensation, the first fruits were dedicated to God, sanctified and set apart for sacred use, in token that the whole harvest and the land itself belonged to God. And the Apostle James says, speaking of the renewed,

"Of his own will begat he us with the word of
"truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of
"his creatures." James i. 18. And St. John says of the hundred and forty and four thousand, "These
"were redeemed from among men, being the first
"fruits unto God and the Lamb." Rev xiv. 4.

The apostle did not reason as some in our days do, that if the first fruits are saved, the lump or harvest must be lost: but on the contrary, that if the first fruit is holy, the lump is also holy.

Now if we consider the Apostles, and the first Christian Church, as the first fruits out of the Jewish nation,

nation, will it not evidently follow, that as the first fruit was certainly holy, the whole lump is considered as the Lord's, and shall at last be prepared for his service? *And if the root be holy, so are the branches*; is self evident. Whether we consider Abraham as the root, or the Jewish Church standing in covenant with God, or the first Christian Church among the Jews as the root, the argument will be the same: for certainly the root was holy, and therefore the branches must be so likewise: and therefore all the branches that are united with the root are in a state of grace and salvation.

Ver. 17, 18. “ And if some of the branches be
“ broken off, and thou being a wild olive tree
“ wert grafted in amongst them, and with them
“ partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;
“ boast not against the branches: but if thou
“ boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root
“ thee.”

Here the Apostle particularly directs his discourse to the Gentile converts, putting them in mind that some of the branches, even the Jews, were broken off, and they, who were as wild olives, and were far off, were brought nigh, and grafted in among the Jewish Christians, those living branches, and with them partook of the root and fatness of the true Olive; and he cautions them not to boast against the natural branches, even though they were cut off; but to consider that they did not bear the root, but the root them. This caution is intended

to keep them from pride, arrogance, self-conceit, and contempt of the Jews: and it is well calculated for the purpose.

Ver. 19. "Thou wilt say then, The branches
" were broken off, that I might be grafted in."

This is what conceited persons might say, and upon the strength of it imagine themselves perfectly secure: but what the Apostle says in the following verses is finely calculated to destroy that state of vain boasting, and carnal security.

Ver. 20, 21, 22. "Well; because of unbelief
" they were broken off, and thou standest by faith.
" Be not high minded, but fear; for if God spared not
" the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare
" not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and
" severity of God; on them who fell, severity; but
" towards thee, goodness; if thou continue in his
" goodness, otherwise, thou also shalt be cut off."

Here the Apostle puts the Gentiles in mind, that as the Jews fell by unbelief, so it is by faith they stand, and that the tenure whereby they hold their privileges is no firmer than that by which the Jews held theirs, and the example of God's severity towards the Jews who fell, is a warning to the Gentile professors: for certainly if God did not spare the natural branches, there is no certainty that he will spare the ingrafted branches. The goodness which God has bestowed upon the Gentile Church must be continued in, or otherwise it shall be cut off, as certainly as the Jewish Church was.

But

But I have no time to make long remarks upon these verses, but hasten to consider the intimations and promises of the final recovery of the Jews, which appear through the residue of the chapter.

Ver. 23. “ And they also, if they abide not still
“ in unbelief, shall be grafted in : for God is able
“ to graft them in again.”

It appears by these words, that infidelity, or unbelief, which was the cause of the cutting off of the Jews, is that which prevents at present their coming in again ; but this shall not always be the case, the nation shall turn to the Lord, and the vail shall be taken away, that is now on their heart : and then shall they be grafted in : for God, to whom nothing is impossible, is able to graft them in again.

This is a wonderful discovery ; men judge too hastily, when they conclude that those whom God once cuts off and rejects, are lost to all eternity, and can never be restored. Here it is declared, that God is able to graft in again those very ones whom he cut off, not only as a nation, but as individuals ; not only their posterity, but even themselves. This is what the God of wonders is able to perform, and it is here intimated that he will do so.

Ver. 24. “ For if thou wert cut out of the olive
“ tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted
“ contrary to nature into a good olive tree ; how
“ much more shall these, which be the natural
“ branches, be grafted into their own olive tree.”

Here

Here the Apostle proposes the former condition of the Gentiles, as even more deplorable than the present state of the Jews, on purpose to convince the Gentile converts of the possibility of the restoration of the Jews. For the Gentiles were cut off from their old stock, as well as the Jews, and that stock was the olive by nature wild and corrupt; then they were grafted in among the Jews who believed, and were made partakers of the root and fatness of the good olive tree with them; and contrary to nature they bore the fruit of the stock, into which they were grafted, and not their own, as is the case with natural scions, (as all that are acquainted with the science of grafting know.) Then certainly it is but reasonable to conclude that God can as easily graft the Jews again into their own olive tree, of which they are the natural branches. The Apostle therefore argues strongly, that if wild branches cut off from their old stock, are grafted into the good olive, and contrary to nature, bear the fruit of the good olive into which they are received; how much more evident it is, that these which be the natural branches, shall certainly be again grafted into their own olive tree.

Ver. 25. "For I would not, brethren, that ye
" should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should
" be wise in your own conceits; That blindness in
" part has happened to Israel, until the fulness of
" the Gentiles be come in."

Ignorance

Ignorance is the true cause of self conceit; and this is exceeding hurtful to Christianity. The Apostle was desirous of instructing his brethren, to prevent their being wise in their own conceits; and therefore he informed them of this mystery, or wonderful dispensation of Providence, which in itself was dark and mysterious, and was hidden until God revealed it, and has chiefly made it known by the ministry of this holy Apostle.

There are several capital mysteries that had been in a great measure hidden and unknown, which St. Paul was favoured to have revealed unto him, and which he made known to the churches. One was the calling the Gentiles, and incorporating them into the church; of this he speaks to the Ephesians, chap. iii. 1—11.

“ For this cause I Paul the prisoner of Jesus
“ Christ for you Gentiles; if ye have heard of the
“ dispensation of the grace of God which is given
“ me to you ward; How that by revelation he made
“ known unto me the mystery, (as I wrote afore in
“ few words whereby when ye read ye may under-
“ stand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ,) :
“ which in other ages was not made known unto
“ the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his
“ holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit; That
“ the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the
“ same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ
“ by the Gospel: whereof I was made a minister
VOL. IV. F according

“ according to the gift of the grace of God, by the
 “ effectual working of his power.

“ Unto me who am less than the least of all
 “ saints is this grace given that I should preach
 “ unto the Gentiles the unfearchable riches of Christ;
 “ And to make all men see what is the fellowship of
 “ the mystery which from the beginning of the
 “ world hath been hid in God, who created all
 “ things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now
 “ unto the principalities and powers in heavenly
 “ places might be made known by the church the
 “ manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal
 “ purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our
 “ Lord.”

Here the calling of the Gentiles and making them partakers of the promise of God by the Gospel, and causing them to be fellow-heirs with the saints, is called *The mystery that is hid in God*, and which the Apostle was desirous to make all men see; yea, and to make this manifold wisdom of God known to holy angels, those *principalities and powers in heavenly places*. And it is indeed worthy for them to look into, and they are desirous of knowing and searching into it.
 1 Pet. i. 12.

But as the calling in of the Gentiles, was a glorious mystery; so also is this which the Apostle would not have the Gentile converts ignorant of; viz. *That blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.*

The

The Apostle calls that blindness which came upon Israel, only *blindness in part*, (though it was upon the greater part of the nation) because there was a remnant, even the election, who obtained salvation, while all the rest were blinded. And this blindness was intended only for a time, and to answer a very glorious purpose; even the calling in of such as were ordained, or pre-disposed to eternal life among the Gentiles, the vessels of honour and mercy, which God has prepared to glory from among them. When this great purpose shall be accomplished, the Lord Jesus will come again and remove the blindness which has so long veiled their faces and their hearts.

Ver. 26, 27. “ And so all Israel shall be saved: “ as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the “ Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from “ Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them when “ I shall take away their sins.”

These are most glorious and reviving words, and positively foretel the salvation of *all Israel*, not of the election only, who obtained salvation when the rest were blinded, but of all Israel, even the nation at large, and all that had been cast off. The Lord Jesus, the great deliverer, shall come out of the heavenly city, the new Jerusalem, or Sion, which is above, shall descend to earth, and come to the land of Israel, and shall remove the iniquity of that land in one day, he shall take away their sins, in and by that new covenant, which he will make with them: he shall

cause ungodliness to cease from Jacob, and unrighteousness from the seed of Israel.

He shall save and redeem *all Israel*. To say that this only intends the election out of Israel is entirely contrary to the sense of the whole chapter, and to the chain of St. Paul's reasoning. He certainly speaks of the salvation of those who were cast off, blinded, cut off, and of the nation at large in distinction from the election, or else it is impossible to understand his meaning. It is worthy of observation, that in this chapter the Apostle calls the greater part, by the name of *some of the branches*, (ver. 17.) on purpose to prevent our mistaking his meaning in the words *all Israel*; for if he called the body of the nation, only *some*, and the blindness of the people at large, only *blindness in part*, because there were a few exceptions, it is evident that he would not call a *few*, or a small number, by the epithet of *all Israel*. Therefore *all Israel*, must intend the whole without exception. And the more critically this is examined the more evidently it will appear to be true.

The Prophet Isaiah after he had spoken of the bowing of every knee to God, and the swearing of every tongue to him, and of the acknowledgment of every one, *In JEHOVAH have I righteousness and strength*, and that to him every one should come, mentions Israel in particular, saying, "In JEHOVAH shall all "the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." And David says, "And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities." Psalm cxxx. 8.

And

And St. Paul says, "And so all Israel shall be saved:" and this salvation is explained in a truly gospel sense, as consisting in a total deliverance from sins and ungodliness. *All Israel* must take in all the dead as well as all the living, those who were cast off in St. Paul's time, as well as those who shall be alive on earth at our Saviour's second coming. For as I observed in my last Lecture, neither persons nor people lose their identity, nor personal, nor national characters, by death nor judgment. Sodom, Samaria, and Jerusalem, shall be known from other nations in that day and afterwards.

This idea I learned from the Scriptures, and therefore I can depend upon its truth. It is of great importance in the present controversy, and it may not be amiss just to refer to some passages which make it evident. Isaiah, in the xiv. chapter of his prophecy, speaks of the nations of the dead as retaining their identity, after death as well as before. And the same idea is abundantly found in the prophecy of Ezekiel, especially chap. xxvi. 20. xxxi. 14—18. xxxii. 18—32.

In the prophecy of Jeremiah, God promises to destroy several nations, and cut them off from the earth, and yet to bring again their captivity in the latter days, which supposes that their identity must remain. See Jer. xlviii. 42, 47. Chap. xlix. 6, 39.

Sodom and her daughters, Samaria and her daughters, and Jerusalem and her daughters, so

plainly distinguished in Ezekiel's prophecy, chap. xvi. are sufficient alone to prove the point.

Our Saviour speaks of Sodom and Gomorrah, who shall be distinguished in the day of Judgment from the inhabitants of those cities where his mighty works were done. See St. Matt. x. 15. And of Tyre and Sidon, for whom it shall be more tolerable in the day of judgment than for Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. See chap. xi. 20—24. and St. Luke x. 12—15.

He also tells the Jews, that the Queen of the South and the men of Ninevah shall rise up in the judgment, and shall condemn them; then, certainly each must have their identity, and be distinguished one from another. St. Luke xi. 31, 32.

And at the day of judgment all nations shall be gathered before him. St. Matt. xxv. 32.

St. John beheld the hundred and forty four thousand sealed out of the twelve tribes of Israel; and after that a great multitude that no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples and, tongues. Rev. chap. vii. 4—9. See also v. 9. And even the inhabitants of the new earth are divided into nations. Rev. xxi. 24, 26. xxii. 2.

From all these passages, and many others that might be produced, it appears that nations and persons retain their identity hereafter; and therefore *all Israel, and Jacob*, who shall be saved, and purged from their sins and transgressions, intend all that ever descended from the loins of Jacob, and the twelve sons
of

of Israel, as well those who are dead, as those alive. For as Christ is the Judge of both quick and dead, and Lord both of the dead and living, so is he the Saviour or Restorer of all men, whether quick or dead. This point being determined that *all Israel*, intends the whole people that are, have been, or that shall be, the final universal salvation of that nation is evident.

Ver. 28, 29. "As concerning the Gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

The Jews here appear in two different and opposite characters; according to the present dispensation of the Gospel they are enemies, strangers, aliens, outlaws, cast off from God, and abhorred by men; and are really enemies to Christ and his religion, and to all the professors of it. Yet when the Gentile Christians consider that the Jews were suffered to fall into, and to continue in this deplorable state for so many ages, for the sakes of the Gentiles that were to come in, it will abate much of their wrath and contempt towards them. But though in this respect they are enemies, yet they are really beloved of God, for their fathers sakes. God loved Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and made a covenant with them, which is confirmed, established, and commanded to a thousand ages and generations; and therefore as the people were not chosen for their own sakes, but because JEHOVAH had a delight in their fathers, and because

of the oath which he sware to them respecting their seed; the same reasons that moved him at first to love them, and elect or choose them still continue, and must for ever remain. For as God sware to their fathers, and gave them great favors, and promised the same to their children to a thousand ages, therefore the promises continue in force, for God does not repent of his gifts and calling. He is the same through every age. For as Balaam said, "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? Behold, I have received commandment to bless; and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it." Numb. xxiii. 19, 20. "And also the strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent." 1 Sam. xv. 29.

The unchangeableness of God hath preserved that people throughout all ages, will again restore them to their land, bring them to be a holy and happy nation, and will finally save and restore, and bring them all into the bond of the new covenant, which shall never be broken. "For I am JEHOVAH, I change not; therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal. iii. 6.

As therefore *the gifts and calling of God are without repentance*, the children are as touching the election, still beloved for the fathers sakes, and shall finally most assuredly be saved; and that they have been so long discarded has been for the Gentiles sakes, that the

the glory of the first born might come to them; and therefore no Christians should hate the Jews, but love, pity, and pray for them.

Ver. 30, 31. “For as ye in times past have not
“believed God, yet have now obtained mercy
“through their unbelief; even so have these also
“now not believed, that through your mercy they
“also may obtain mercy.”

In these words the Apostle draws a comparison between the past and present state of the Gentile Christians, and the present and future state of the unbelieving Jews: ‘Ye in time past were as far from
‘believing God, as they are now; you have now
‘obtained mercy; they shall obtain mercy hereafter,
‘as certainly as you have already obtained it. You
‘have obtained mercy through their unbelief and
‘rejection, which has been therefore much for your
‘advantage; they have not believed now, that you
‘might believe, and that through your mercy, or
‘the favour bestowed on you, they also may obtain
‘mercy at last; and you be of more advantage to
‘them than they have been to you, but in a different manner. They went out for you to come in,
‘and you are come in, that by your means, or by
‘seeing the mercy given to you, they may also come
‘at last to share with you in the blessings of your
‘common Father’s love.’

Ver. 32. “For God hath concluded them all,
“(or shut them up together) in unbelief, that he
“might have mercy upon all.”

Here

Here the great plot is at once unravelled, and such a glorious design of God in their blinding and rejection is discovered, as turns at once the thickest darkness of midnight into noon day, and the very shadow of death into the morning.

Fourthly, this is the last and great design of God in blinding and shutting them up; but it is such a design as could never have been discovered unless God had revealed it. For could any one have imagined that such mercy could ever have found its way through such a cloud of judgment and severity? Nay more, that such an awful and gloomy dispensation, besides being big with many important events, and great good to mankind, should be intended for the express purpose of reserving them for mercy and salvation? God's thoughts are not our thoughts, neither our ways his ways. If any man that had never read the Bible had been told that God had shut up a people in blindness and darkness, and concluded a nation in unbelief, and had continued them in that dreadful situation from age to age, and from generation to generation, through many ages; and then had been desired to give his opinion what the design of God had been therein; what do you imagine he would have said? Would he ever have so much as guessed that any thing but wrath and indignation had been intended for them? And how would he be surprised to be told that this was all designed to prepare the way for the brightest possible display of mercy and grace in the conclusion! What do you

you think? Would he have believed it possible? It is certain that but very few that have read the Bible all their days believe any such thing now; but take all possible pains to evade the force of the words. But what can we make of this declaration, unless we allow that God will have mercy upon all those whom he hath shut up in unbelief, and that he shut them up for that very purpose?

But how very different was this design in reality from what it was in appearance: it was like a wheel within a wheel! the great design is hidden until its sudden discovery at the last, then we are surprized to see such grace and mercy burst forth out of the midst of judgment, to the praise of God's great name, the happiness of the nation so long rejected, and the joy of the whole creation. Here mercy rejoiceth against judgment, and the warm heartedness of God's love succeeds, and for ever puts an end to his displeasure. No wonder that with such an astonishing view before him, the Apostle bursts forth into an extacy, as in the following words:

Ver. 33. "O the depth of the riches both of
"the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearch-
"able are his judgments, and his ways past finding
"out!"

These noble exclamations express the joy and wonder of the Apostle at the display of such mercy, where nothing but judgment might have been expected. Here is a plan where the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God,
astonish

astonish the mind of the beholder. But oh how unsearchable are the judgments of God ! If the scene was nothing but continued judgment to all eternity, this would be nothing so wonderful; but to see the richest mercy spring forth from the deepest misery, and life immortal from the shades of death, is such an astonishing instance of the unsearchableness of God's counsels, and the depth of his wisdom and knowledge, that will for ever fill the universe with adoration and praise to that God whose ways are past finding out.

Ver. 34, 35. "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?"

These questions imply that God's wisdom, goodness, grace, and love are all from himself, and that he is self moved in his ways, and has received nothing from the highest of his creatures, but on the contrary, they must receive all from him. These questions are designed as a severe check to the pride, presumption, and arrogance of those men, who would presume to limit the divine goodness, and mercy, and who pretend to understand the counsels of heaven in quite a different manner to that which God hath manifested. There are some who would seem as though they had been of the counsel of heaven, and they talk of the eternal purposes of God as though they had instructed their Creator, and given him advice. But God is sufficiently wise, powerful, and

and good, to plan and execute his glorious designs without the help of any of his creatures. "Who hath directed the spirit of JEHOVAH, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsels, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge; and shewed to him the way of understanding?" Isai. xl. 13, 14. None can pretend to have done any of these; and therefore all should humbly adore and reverence the unsearchable counsels of infinite wisdom, which God hath revealed.

Ver. 36. "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

All things are of God, all were made by him, all proceeded and came forth from him, all things are through and by him, and all shall return to him. Every good and perfect gift comes down from him, and all praise and thanksgiving should return to him. We owe to him our existence, and our well being; in him we live, move, and from him derive all our enjoyments, and therefore we should devote ourselves to his service. He is the first cause, and the last end of all things; and he is worthy of all praise and glory from all creatures, from age to age, world without end. Amen. So be it; let the whole creation praise God for his loving kindness and his tender mercies. Who can set forth all his mighty acts? Who can shew forth all his praise?

I have

I have now gone through what I proposed in this Lecture, and having proved the restoration of the Jews, I leave the General Restoration of all Mankind to be deduced therefrom as a natural consequence. For God is not the God of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also; we have all one father, one God hath created us, and he is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. All his works shall praise him, and his saints shall bless him. "O that
"men would praise JEHOVAH for his goodness,
"and for his wonderful works to the children of
"men!"

END OF LECTURE XXXIV.

H Y M N S.

I.

MESSIAH, full of grace
Redeem'd by thee we plead
The promise made to Abra'm's race
To souls for ages dead.

II.

Their bones are quite dry'd up
Throughout the vale appear;
Cut off and lost their last faint hope
To see thy kingdom here.

III.

Open their graves, and bring
The outcasts forth to own
Thou art their Lord, their God and King,
Their true anointed one.

IV.

To save the race forlorn
Thy glorious arm display:
And shew the world a nation born,
A nation in a day.

FATHER

I M Y H

FATHER of faithful Abra'm, hear,
Our earnest suit for Abra'm's seed,
Justly they claim the softest pray'r
From us, adopted in their stead :
Who mercy through their fall obtain,
And Christ by their rejection gain.

II.

Outcasts from thee and scatter'd wide
Through ev'ry nation under heav'n
Blaspheming whom they crucify'd,
Unfav'd, unpity'd, unforgiv'n.
Branded like Cain, they bear their load,
Abhorr'd of men, and curs'd of God,

III.

But hast thou finally forsook,
For ever cast thy own away ?
Wilt thou not bid the murd'ers look
On him they pierc'd, and weep and pray ?
Yes gracious Lord, thy word is past :
All Israel shall be fav'd at last.

IV.

Come then, thou great deliv'rer come !
The veil from Jacob's heart remove !
Receive thy ancient people home ;
That quicken'd by thy dying love,
The world may their reception find,
Life from the dead for all mankind.

LECTURE XXXV.

That grand and glorious Event of our Blessed SAVIOUR's going and Preaching the Gospel to the Spirits in Prison, who were disobedient in the days of Noah.

I PET. iii. 18, 19, 20.

FOR CHRIST ALSO HATH ONCE SUFFERED FOR SINS, THE JUST FOR THE UNJUST, THAT HE MIGHT BRING US TO GOD, BEING PUT TO DEATH IN THE FLESH, BUT QUICKENED BY THE SPIRIT: BY WHICH ALSO HE WENT AND PREACHED UNTO THE SPIRITS IN PRISON: WHO SOMETIME WERE DISOBEDIENT, WHEN ONCE THE LONG-SUFFERING OF GOD WAITED IN THE DAYS OF NOAH, WHILE THE ARK WAS A PREPARING, WHEREIN FEW, THAT IS EIGHT SOULS WERE SAVED BY WATER.

THE subjects that are now before us are of the highest importance, in whatever light we view them; the sufferings of Christ for sins; his character contrasted with ours, *the just for the unjust*; some of his designs in suffering, viz. to set us an example, and to bring us to God; his *crucifixion*, being put to death in the flesh: his *resurrection*, being quickened by the spirit. But the principal design which I have in view at this time, is to speak of that very glorious and

joyful event, Christ's descent into hell, to preach the gospel to the spirits in prison, who sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing.

But before I come to speak of this subject, it is necessary that I should say something of the sufferings of Christ, and of our imitating his example; but I am sensible that if I was to attempt to collect all that the Scriptures speak upon these heads, I must write a volume instead of a discourse; and were I to enter at large into the many grand designs which he had in suffering, I scarcely should know when to stop; I will therefore chiefly confine myself to what St. Peter speaks upon the subject in this epistle.

He informs us that the prophets enquired and searched diligently, and that they prophesied of the grace that comes to us through the death of Christ; "searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." Chap. i. 10, 11.

Most of the prophets speak of the sufferings of Christ. David mentions the words which he uttered on the cross, and records the very speeches which his enemies insulted him withal. The very piercing of his hands and feet, the parting his garments, the casting lots upon his vesture, and mocking him with gall and vinegar; were circumstances mentioned by the Royal Psalmist with the utmost exactness, as
though

though he had actually beheld them. He must in these instances have spoken of the sufferings of Christ, for nothing like those things ever happened to himself, or to any man in his day. See Psal. xxii. 1, 7, 8, 16, 18. lxix. 21.

Isaiah speaks of his giving his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; and that he hid not his face from shame and spitting. And says, "His visage was so marred, more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." See chap. l. 6. lii. 14. And the liii chapter is filled with an history of his sufferings, and death. Micah says, "They shall smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek." Micah, v. 1. Zechariah mentions the circumstances of his being sold for thirty pieces of silver, and the money being cast to the potter, in the temple or house of JEHOVAH; and says, "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced." And he also wrote the prophecy which our Saviour said should be fulfilled in him: "Awake, O sword against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith JEHOVAH of Hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." See Zech. xi. 12, 13. xii. 10. xiii. 7.

Thus the prophets unitedly testify of the sufferings of Christ.

The Apostle Peter speaks also of redemption, through his blood, and says, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible

“ things, as silver and gold, from your vain conver-
 “ sation received by tradition from your fathers ;
 “ But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a
 “ lamb without blemish and without spot, who ve-
 “ rily was fore-ordained before the foundation of
 “ the world, but was manifested in these last times
 “ for you.” Chap. i. 18, 19, 20.

When we view the blood of Christ as the price of
 our redemption from a vain conversation, and a life
 of sin, his sufferings appear of the highest import-
 ance. This blessed Apostle above all others, sets
 forth the suffering Redeemer as our example, in the
 most expressive manner, but yet joins with that idea
 his bearing our sins and iniquities.

“ For this is thank-worthy, if a man for con-
 “ science toward God endure grief, suffering
 “ wrongfully. For what glory is it, if when ye
 “ are buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it pa-
 “ tiently ? but if when ye do well, and suffer for it,
 “ ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.
 “ For even hereunto were ye called : because Christ
 “ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that
 “ ye should follow his steps ; who did no sin, nei-
 “ ther was guile found in his mouth : Who, when
 “ he was reviled, reviled not again ; when he suf-
 “ fered he threatened not, but committed himself to
 “ him that judgeth righteously. Who his ownself
 “ bare our sins in his own body on the tree ; that
 “ we being dead to sin, should live unto righteous-
 “ ness, by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye
 “ were

“ were as sheep going astray ; but are now return-
 “ ed unto the shepherd and bishop of your souls.”

Chap. ii. 19 — 25.

And in the words foregoing my text, he says,
 “ And who is he that will harm you, if ye be fol-
 “ lowers of that which is good ? But, and if ye suf-
 “ fer for righteousness sake, happy are ye ; and be
 “ not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled :—
 “ But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts ; and be
 “ ready always to give an answer to every man that
 “ asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you,
 “ with meekness and fear : having a good con-
 “ science ; that whereas they speak evil of you as
 “ evil doers, may be ashamed that falsely accuse your
 “ good conversation in Christ. For it is better if
 “ the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well
 “ doing than for evil doing. For Christ also hath
 “ once suffered for sins, &c.

And in some following words he further improves
 the exhortation, “ Forasmuch then as Christ hath
 “ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves like-
 “ wise with the same mind : for he that hath suffer-
 “ ed in the flesh hath ceased from sin ; that he no
 “ longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh,
 “ to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.” See
 Chap. iii. 13—18. iv. 1, 2.

And again he further enforces the same thing,
 saying, “ Beloved, think it not strange concerning
 “ the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some
 “ strange thing happened unto you : But rejoice in

“ as much as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings ;
 “ that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad
 “ also with exceeding great joy. If ye be reproach-
 “ ed for the name of Christ, happy are ye ; for the
 “ spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. On
 “ their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part
 “ he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a
 “ murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a
 “ busy body in other men’s matters. Yet if any
 “ man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed,
 “ but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the
 “ time is come that judgment must begin at the
 “ house of God ; and if it first begin at us, what
 “ shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel
 “ of God ? And if the righteous scarcely be saved,
 “ where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear ?—
 “ Wherefore let them that suffer according to the
 “ will of God, commit their souls unto him in well
 “ doing, as unto a faithful Creator.” Chap. iv.
 12—19.

In all these places St. Peter mentions the suffer-
 ings and death of Christ, and speaks of some of the
 benefits which we derive therefrom, especially the
 salvation of our souls from sin, and consolation under
 all our afflictions and persecutions, which we endure
 for his sake. And these are advantages of the great-
 est importance to us that can be conceived. For, to
 be assured of felicity hereafter, to be taught how we
 may certainly attain that happy state, to be actually
 prepared for it in time, and to be supported and
 comforted

comforted under all our persecutions, distresses, and sufferings in this life, must be all that any can desire for themselves, or for their own personal felicity. Having just read these several passages, I shall come to remark more particularly upon the words that I first read.

The word *For*, alludes to what went before, and thereby we are encouraged to imitate the example of him who suffered, who was *Christ*, the *anointed* Prophet, Priest, King, Saviour and Messiah. He *also hath once suffered*; as he *also* hath suffered, we need not be ashamed to suffer for well doing; but should strive in all respects to copy after his example, in doing no evil or harm to any, in doing good to all, according to our opportunity and ability; and when we are called to suffer reviling, reproach, or persecution for his sake, to use no reviling language in return; but contrariwise, blessing; and to suffer with meekness, patience, and entire resignation to the Divine will, committing our souls and all their important concerns into the hands of our kind and faithful Creator, who judgeth righteously, and will most certainly reward those in a most glorious manner, who suffer for his cause in this world, and will severely punish, in a future state, those who have afflicted and persecuted his faithful servants.

Christ *also hath once suffered*; his sufferings are past forever, and though severe, yet they were limited to a short period, and that period is now gone: He suffered once in his person, but shall never suffer thus again. “Knowing that Christ, being raised from

“the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.” Rom. vi. 9, 10. And he said to St. John, “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, amen; and have the keys of hell and death.” Rev. i. 18.

Greatly did our blessed Redeemer suffer; his whole life was a continued scene of virtuous actions and bitter sufferings. “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered: And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.” Heb. v. 8, 9.

“For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” Chap. ii. 10.

He suffered reproach, contempt, poverty, disgrace, want and woe, all the time of his pilgrimage here; his days were spent in sorrow, and his nights in weeping; grief was his companion and acquaintance; he suffered temptations and trials of almost every kind. “For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.” Heb. ii. 18. “For we have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Chap. iv. 15.

But the scene of his sufferings, to which St. Peter particularly refers in these words, is that of his death upon

upon the cross: There he suffered indeed! Who can describe the sorrows which he felt in that most dreadful hour, when the powers of darkness surrounded him, and had leave given them to try him? When delivered into the hands of wicked and cruel men, he had been falsely accused, smitten, buffeted, blindfolded, spit upon, mocked, scourged, crowned with thorns, condemned as a malefactor, led forth to suffer the most painful and shameful death, amidst the scoffs and derision of his enemies; forsaken by his friends, given up to the rage and malice of his most inveterate foes, who carried their hellish cruelty to such a pitch as to crucify him, and put him to that kind of death which among the Romans, was only ordered for the greatest criminals, and vilest slaves! On the cross he endured the greatest mockery, and bitterest grief; his enemies in crowds stood round him, reviling him, wagging their heads, and reproaching him with folly, weakness, and deception. He was crucified between two thieves, as though he had been the greatest malefactor! His thirst was mocked with gall and vinegar; his complaints were ridiculed; and to compleat his miseries, his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; he felt an inward direliction superior to all his outward sufferings, which caused him to cry out in the most lamentable manner, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

This is just a specimen of his sufferings, in that his bitter agony and passion, enough to make the hearts

hearts of the most obdurate to bleed within them, at the consideration of what he suffered.

Christ once suffered *for sins*; it was sins that caused him so severely to suffer, not his own, for he had none; he was a Lamb without blemish and without spot; 1 Pet. i. 19. He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. Chap. ii. 22. He offered himself without spot to God. Heb. ix. 14. "For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." Chap. vii. 26.

So as it is plain that he suffered *for sins*, (*For in that he died, he died unto sin once*;) and yet it is absolutely certain, that he had none of his own; therefore it is evident, that he suffered for the sins of men. And this is according to the inspired language of the prophet Isaiah. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: The chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one his own way; and JEHOVAH hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah liii. 4, 5, 6.

And the Apostle Peter says, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree; that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed." 1 Pet. ii. 24.

And

And St. Paul informs us, that Christ was “made
 “a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every
 “one that hangeth on a tree.” Gal. iii. 13. And that,
 “It behoved him to be made like unto his brethren;
 “that he might be a merciful and faithful High
 “Priest in things pertaining to God, to make re-
 “conciliation for the sins of the people.” Heb. ii. 17.
 And that it is he, “Whom God hath set forth to be
 “a propitiation through faith in his blood, to de-
 “clare his righteousness for the remission of sins that
 “are past, through the forbearance of God.” Rom.
 iii. 25.

And the Apostle John confirms the same idea, by
 saying, “And he is the propitiation for our sins;
 “and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the
 “whole world.” 1 John, ii. 2.

I need not multiply proofs, for the thing is plain;
 Christ suffered for sins, but as he had none of his
 own to bear, he certainly bore the sins of men, and
 suffered for their good, and on their account.

The Apostle speaks of the character both of the
 sufferers, and of those for whom he suffered; *the just*
for the unjust: This is wonderful indeed, and is the
 highest commendation of the love of God to us
 poor sinners! “For when we were yet without
 “strength, in due time Christ died for the un-
 “godly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one
 “die: yet, peradventure, for a good man some
 “would even dare to die. But God commendeth
 “his

“ his love towards us in that while we were yet sin-
 “ ners Christ died for us.” Rom. v. 6, 7, 8.

Jesus Christ, the righteous, the just, the holy, the good, died for sinners, enemies, vile, unjust, unclean transgressors. This amazing difference between him and us, displays the Divine benevolence towards us in such a manner, as ought forever to fill us with wonder, love, and praise.

Next, he mentions one of the great designs of the death of Christ, viz. *that he might bring us to God*. This was one of the many purposes he had in view when he died on the cross; and this is a very great work; for, in order to bring us to God, he must deliver us from our sins and iniquities, and from this present evil world. And to this purpose we read, “ But now in Christ Jesus, ye who some-
 “ times were far off, are made nigh by the
 “ blood of Christ.” Ephes. ii. 13. “ For through
 “ him we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access by
 “ one spirit unto the Father.” Ver. 18.

He “ gave himself for our sins, that he might
 “ deliver us from this present evil world, according
 “ to the will of God and our Father.” Gal. i. 4.

He “ gave himself for us, that he might redeem
 “ us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a
 “ peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Tit.
 ii. 14.

“ Wherefore he is able also to save them to the
 “ uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he
 “ ever

“ ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Heb. vii. 25.

It is therefore evident, without citing any more proofs from Scripture, that the death of Christ opened a new and living way to the Father; removed the obstructions and impediments, and gave fallen man access to God: The virtue of the blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin; and his death is one of the most powerful means to draw us from the love of sin to the love and service of God our Creator. “ For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again.” 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

It was because that we all, like sheep, had gone astray, and had turned every one his own way, that the Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all; for we were as sheep going astray, but Jesus died for us, that we might return again to the shepherd and bishop of souls. The death of the blessed Redeemer was therefore designed to reclaim and bring back the wandering children of men. And we are happy to find it predicted, that it shall finally accomplish that glorious purpose. “ He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.” Isai. liii. 11. And he himself said, “ And I, if I be lifted

“ lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto
“ me.” St. John, xii. 32.

He therefore did not die in vain, for he shall justify and redeem, and draw to himself the whole multitude of those whose iniquities he bore; and as he shall certainly draw all men to himself, he shall also bring them to God, for he is the way to the Father, and no man cometh to the Father but by him, as he informs us, St. John, xiv. 6.

The Apostle also informs us, that he was *put to death in the flesh*; his body was slain, he actually suffered a violent death; “ being found in fashion as a
“ man, he humbled himself, and became obedient
“ unto death, even the death of the cross. Phil.
ii. 8.

“ Forasmuch then as the children are partakers
“ of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took
“ part of the same; that through death he might
“ destroy him that had the power of death, that is
“ the Devil: And deliver them who through fear
“ of death were all their life-time subject to bondage.” Heb. ii. 14, 15.

He actually resigned his life, his flesh was torn and nailed, wounded and pierced even to death. He gave up the ghost, commended his spirit into the hands of his heavenly Father; his soul left the temple of his body, which became for a time subject to death, though not to corruption.

For though the Apostle informs us, that he was *put to death in the flesh*, yet he immediately assures us
also,

also, that he was *quickened by the spirit*; that is, he soon revived again; his spirit, or soul, re-entered his body, and caused his flesh to awake to immortal life, no more to taste again of pain or death. This glorious doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, is of the highest importance in itself, and in its consequences. Our salvation depends upon its truth, and therefore we have the most undoubted evidence of the fact, that can possibly be desired.

Having just made these brief remarks on the text, as preparatory to the main design I have in view, I come to speak of that very glorious event mentioned by St. Peter in the words before us.

Though the Apostle seems to speak only transiently, or occasionally, of Christ's going by his spirit to preach to the spirits in prison; yet, having mentioned the matter, he takes pains to inform us who they were, so as not to leave us in the dark in this weighty and important piece of intelligence. As this is news from the unknown world, which is not only a subject of the greatest curiosity, (as it certainly is) but is to the last degree interesting, and is published by the highest authority, it must inevitably engage our attention, if any thing is able to do it.

It seems to be an established point, that our Saviour descended into *Hades*, or Hell: This is explained by some only to intend the state of the dead in general; others think it must be confined to the state of his body in the grave; while others
allow

allow that he visited the regions of paradise, the abodes of the happy; but that he did not visit the miserable in the regions of despair, for whom they think there is no hope, nor any possibility of redemption. While others suppose, that the soul of Christ actually went to Hell, and suffered there the positive pain and torment that was the portion of sinners, and more than they could have endured to all eternity. Others looking upon this last opinion as absurd, and almost blasphemous, without hesitation roundly deny that ever Christ went to Hell at all, and will not even repeat that article of the Creed, though evidently founded upon the letter of the Scripture. While others, though they profess to assent to the article, never give themselves any trouble about considering its sense, but repeat it as a matter of no great consequence, and merely as words of course. And it is true, that according to most of the systems now in use amongst us, no meaning of any great importance can be found in this article, and therefore no wonder that it is but lightly regarded.

I shall pursue the same methods in my enquiry into this subject, as I have done in others, viz. examine what the Scriptures say upon this head, directly or indirectly, and endeavour to abide by the plain evident meaning of the Sacred Writings, believing them to be written to inform, and not to deceive us.

The original passage with which we begin, is Psal. xvi. 9, 10. "Therefore my heart is glad, and my
"glory

“glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope.
 “For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither
 “will thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”

Upon this passage I shall just observe, that if nothing more was intended by the soul of Christ being left in Hell, than the continuance of his body in the grave, it seems quite unaccountable why the Holy Ghost should take such pains to make a distinction where there was no difference, and should use two words, where one would seem to answer the purpose so much better. Does not the word *neither*, imply that another subject is introduced? And is there the least propriety in its being used upon any other supposition? Is not the plain sense of this passage evidently in favour of the separate state? So Dr. Watts, explains it in his version of the Psalms,

“My spirit Lord, thou wilt not leave,
 “Where souls departed are :
 “Nor quit my body to the grave,
 “To see corruption there.”

The next passage where this subject is glanced at, is in our Saviour's application of the figure, type, or sign of Jonas the prophet, St. Matt. xii. 39, 40. His words are as follow, “An evil and adulterous
 “generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no
 “sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas : For as Jonas was three days and three nights
 “in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be

“three days and three nights in the heart of the
“earth.” See also Chap. xvii. 4. St. Luke, xi
29, 30.

Now let me ask any candid considerate person,
whether Jonas was kept in the fish's mouth all the
time, or was he not swallowed down into his belly?

And can we suppose that our Saviour had no re-
ference to any thing further in those words than to
his body being laid just in the surface of the earth?

“Why should we gloss the sacred pages so,

“As to explain their meaning quite away?

“For *soit* put *body*, *surface*, for the *centre*?

“By this same rule wemight destroy all sense,

“And make the sacred books mean what we please.”

If we examine the Scriptures, we shall find the
heart, or lowest parts of the earth, frequently men-
tioned as the place of souls departed, and especially
the wicked. As in Psalm lxiii. 9. “But those tha
“seek my soul to destroy it, shall go into the lower
“parts of the earth.” See Ezek. xxxi. 14, 16, 17,
18, xxxii. 18, 24, &c. In these passages the nether
parts of the earth, and the pit, are used to express
the state and situation of the miserable after death.
And thus it seems evident to me that our Lord inti-
mated his intention of visiting these prisoners, when
he said, that he should be so long in the heart of the
earth.

The next passage that I shall read, is Acts. ii. 24,—
31.—“Whom God hath raised up, having loosed
“the pains of death; because it was not possible that
“he

" he should be holden of it. For David speaketh
 " concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before
 " my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should
 " not be moved : Therefore did my heart rejoice,
 " and my tongue was glad ; moreover also, my flesh
 " shall rest in hope ; because thou wilt not leave my
 " soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy
 " One to see corruption : Thou hast made known
 " to me the ways of life : Thou shalt make me full
 " of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren
 " let me freely speak unto you of the Patriarch
 " David, that he is both dead and buried, and his
 " sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore be-
 " ing a prophet, and knowing, that God had sworn
 " with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins
 " according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ, to
 " sit on his throne : He seeing this before, spake of
 " the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not
 " left in Hell, neither his flesh did see corruption."

Here the apostle Peter, keeps up the same distinction that the Psalmist did, and declares, both that the soul of Christ was not left in Hell, and that his flesh did not see corruption ; where it is evident that he distinguishes his *soul* from his *flesh*, and *hell* from the *grave*, for his soul was in *hell*, though it was not left there, and his flesh was buried in the *sepulchre*, though it saw no corruption.

The argument of St. Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians, chap. iv. 8, 9, 10, is very strong. He argues from the certainty of his ascension into the

highest heavens, that he must have first descended into the lower parts of the earth. "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things."

These scriptures go to prove, that the soul of Christ as certainly went to hell, as he afterwards ascended to heaven; and as I hope none will deny the latter so I do not see how the force of the former can be evaded.

Having clearly seen, from the testimony of truth, that Christ by his spirit went into the prison, or in other words, that his soul descended into hell, the lower, nether parts, or heart of the earth: Let us next seek to find why, or for what reasons it was necessary for Christ's soul to go into hell.

And after the strictest examination that I can make, I cannot find sufficient ground in the Scripture to assert that Christ went into hell to suffer; but on the contrary, I believe that all our Saviour's sufferings were ended when he said, "It is finished: Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." St. John xix. 30, St. Luke, xxiii. 46.

But though Jesus certainly did not descend into hell to suffer there, yet there were several important purposes which made it absolutely necessary for him

him to go thither ; these I shall just briefly mention.

1. It appears to be a necessary part of the process of Christ : he left the high court of Heaven above, came forth from the bosom of the Father, came down to earth, traversed the universe as it were, and therefore in describing that grand and perfect circle from the heavenly city, through universal nature and back again to the highest heavens, it was necessary that he should take the lowest parts of the earth, or Hell in his way. In this he appears like a prince actually visiting all his dominions, seeing every thing with his own eyes, not contenting himself with the best reports of others. So he visited Sodom before he destroyed it. " And JEHOVAH said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous ; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me, and if not, I will know." Gen. xviii. 20, 21.

And so for greater purposes he appears to have visited the dark abodes ; and this visit was necessary before he could re-ascend to his high throne of glory. This appears to me the very meaning of the passage already cited to prove his actual descent into Hell : " Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth ?" This was therefore a necessary part of his grand process.

2. That

2. That the Scriptures might be fulfilled, both prophecy and figure. None of the words of God are in vain; and therefore the prophecy *that his soul should not be left in Hell*, plainly implied that it should go thither, even as the promise that his flesh should not see corruption, certainly implied that *he had flesh*, and also that he should suffer *death in the flesh*. And as none of the words of prophecy can fail, so neither can the types: The paschal Lamb was not to have one of its bones broken, and as it was a figure of Christ, our passover, who was sacrificed for us, so neither could one of his bones be broken: See Exod. xii. 46. 1 Cor. v. 7. St. John xix. 36.

Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and nights; so to fulfil that type Christ was not only laid in the grave, but descended into the heart of the earth. Jonah was alive and active in mind in his gloomy prison; Jesus was much more so: Jonah voluntarily suffered himself to be cast into the sea to save the lives of the mariners; Christ willingly descended into Hell, to fulfil this type, and to save mankind. Jonah prayed in the fish's belly for his own deliverance, which he obtained; but Christ preached deliverance to the captives in the prison of Hell, which they obtained through him. Jonah's being swallowed by the fish, and afterwards redeemed therefrom, was a most wonderful thing, such as never happened before, and which never entered into the mind of man to imagine, and which would not have been

been believed, if it had not been witnessed by the highest authority : and the same may be said of our Saviour's descent into Hell, and the great things that he performed there.

3. Christ went down into the nether parts of the earth, or descended into Hell as a mighty warrior and triumphant conqueror. He pursued his enemies to their last retreat and strong hold, and gave them such a defeat as will not soon be forgotten by them. This the Apostle had in view, when he speaks of Christ's victory in these words : " Having " spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew " of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Col. ii. 15.

These principalities and powers, must be understood to be evil angels, and not good angels, who are also called principalities and powers in heavenly places. Ephes. iii. 10.

These are the subjects, faithful servants, and attendants of Christ, and therefore he certainly did not spoil them, nor shew them openly as enemies defeated ; nor could he triumph over his friends. But the foes that he spoiled, were those of whom the Apostle speaks in Ephes. vi. 12. " For we wrestle not " against flesh and blood, (only, or as our principal " enemies) but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this " world, (or age) against spiritual wickedness in high " places." These he spoiled, by taking their captives from them, and leading *them* in chains at his chariot

chariot wheels, who had led the human race captive in the chains of sin. What else can be the meaning of his leading *captivity captive*? But of this, I shall speak more hereafter, when I come to treat of the deliverance of the prisoners.

4. The glorious Redeemer passed through all places and states, that he might receive the power and dominion over all: for this cause among many others, he passed through death, that he might destroy the power of death and the Devil, Heb. ii. 14. and for this purpose he descended to Hell, that he might have the dominion over it: and he says to St. John, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Rev. i. 18. Death, hell, and the grave, are subject to his controul, and he has power over all, as he has passed through all: he is the rightful Lord of all in Heaven, for from Heaven he came, and to Heaven he is returned; all on earth belong to him who dwelt on earth; all in every state, both living, dying, and dead, are the property of the Lord, who passed through life and death, and rose again. "For to this end, Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord, both of the dead and living." Rom. xiv. 9.

If then his dying, rising, and reviving, made him the Lord both of the dead and living, then certainly his descending into Hell, gave him authority over all the prisoners there.

After

After our Saviour rose from the dead, he could say, "All power is given unto me in Heaven and in earth." St. Matt. xxviii. 18. And when he ascended up on high, he was placed "Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, (or age) but also in that which is to come." And all things were put under his feet, and he is the head over all things to the Church. Ephes. i. 21, 22. And thus Jesus obtained all dominion in Heaven, earth, under the earth, and over Death, and Hell, and all things : So that he filleth all things by virtue of his first descending, and then ascending up far above all Heavens. Ephes. iv. 10.

5. Jesus Christ, (as St. Peter informs us in this text) went into Hell that he might preach to the spirits in prison; and this brings me to the main point I had in view; but I have found so many important things to detain me by the way, and which it was necessary for me to touch upon briefly, that I shall not be able to get through the subject in this discourse.

What I have said, may only be called hints, and might have been greatly enlarged; and when I preached upon this subject here, I delivered two pretty long discourses upon what I have already mentioned, but as I intend to comprize the whole of what I have to say upon this matter in two Lectures, I am obliged to leave many things unsaid that might be spoken much to the purpose.

The

The common way of evading the force of this passage in favour of the doctrine of the Restoration of lost souls after death, is by referring it entirely to the preaching of Noah. And so then the meaning of the whole is only that "Christ by his spirit in Noah preached to the inhabitants of the old world, who in the time when St. Peter wrote were all spirits in prison, shut up in endless despair." But I have endeavoured, in a former Lecture, to prove this to be a forced, unnatural, and absurd interpretation of the text.

The first circumstance that I shall now insist upon, as a proof that it was Christ himself in person, and not Noah that the Apostle here speaks of, who preached to the spirits in prison, is that this event took place after our Saviour's death, and therefore could not have been in the days of Noah. Christ suffered for sins, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit: It would be strange to the last degree, if St. Peter, when speaking of the sufferings and resurrection of Christ, had immediately connected in the sentence, how Christ by his spirit assisted Moses in governing Israel, Joshua and the Judges of Israel in the administration of justice, or Solomon in building the temple, or the Prophets in prophesying; because, however true it might have been that they were assisted by the spirit of Christ, the argument was nothing to the purpose that the Apostle was treating on: and the same may with equal propriety be said of the preaching of Noah;
for

for what had that to do with the sufferings of Christ? but if according to the plain meaning and construction of the words, Christ himself, by his own spirit, or soul disembodied, went into the place where the spirits of the disobedient were confined in prison, and preached to them; then there is a plain natural sense in the expressions, and that sense is infinitely important.

It is said that Christ *went* and preached to the spirits in prison; the Greek words are such as are used to signify a journey to a distant place, and are used in ver. 22, to express his ascension into Heaven. Jesus went down to the dark abodes of sorrow, as really as he afterwards went up into Heaven, to the regions of bliss and glory. He went on a most glorious errand; such a journey none but himself could have undertaken. But he that came down from Heaven to earth, to preach to living men, knowing the deplorable state of the dead, shut up and bound in prison, laid down his life for them, and then went in person to preach to them in their gloomy caverns. Oh! how wonderful was the process of Christ! he cloathed himself with our flesh, that he (among many other purposes) might preach to living men; and he put off his tabernacle of flesh, that he might go among disembodied spirits, and preach to them. Thus rendering himself accessible to all, by assuming their several states; and being as far as possible conformed to all, for their advantage. He entered into the condition of all men, both living and dead,
that

that he might not only sympathize with, but save and restore all those for whom he shed his blood.

If Joseph had not gone into the prison, he could not have interpreted the dreams of those who were already in prison; so if Jesus had not become a disembodied spirit, and entered into the prison where spirits were confined, he could not have preached to those who were there shut up in darkness. These were his auditors, according to my text, and I firmly believe that the words are true, and that he did preach, not to men in the flesh, but to disembodied spirits; not to those that walk at liberty, but to those who were confined in chains of darkness, and were kept in long and close imprisonment; and must have forever remained without hope of deliverance, had not the kind Redeemer deigned to visit them. For no man in Heaven, nor on earth, nor under the earth, had either will or power to have performed such an amazing enterprize. As for the generality of men on earth, they are so far from ever having contrived such a plan, that even now, when it is published by the highest authority, they will make twenty evasions, rather than believe that ever our Lord undertook such a journey, to visit and preach to the spirits in prison.

One famous preacher in this city undertook not long since, publicly to deny that article of the creed: "*He descended into Hell,*" for he was afraid, if such a thing was allowed, the damned themselves might be saved. And how many of my acquaintance

ance are angry with me for daring to assert that Christ ever went into the prison of Hell, and especially for any such purpose as preaching to the prisoners there?

The gulph fixed between the abodes of the happy and miserable, was absolutely impassible to all, till Jesus came, till his ghost, or spirit, which left his body, undertook and performed the difficult but important enterprize. Oh, how ought Jesus to be loved and adored, who visited the prisoners in their dreary confinement ! The philanthropic Mr. Howard is justly admired, and celebrated for his uncommon and astonishing tenderness in visiting so many dark, unwholesome, dreary prisons, and horrid dungeons, and seeking the relief of that unhappy and abandoned class of men, the prisoners: But Oh ! could mankind know the kindness of Jesus in going and preaching to the spirits in the dark prison of Hell, what songs of praise and adoration would appear to be his due ! I wish that what I have said may take that effect in the small circle of my acquaintance, to bring more praise to the name of our blessed Saviour, for his pity to the most miserable of the human race, even those unhappy prisoners to whom he preached.

But if the question be asked, What did Jesus Christ the anointed Saviour preach, or proclaim to them ? I answer, He proclaimed the Gospel ; of this we may be assured, for nothing can be more absurd than the idea that the merciful Redeemer went into the prison to proclaim condemnation and endless misery to them. Such an insinuation would be in the highest degree

degree reproachful and dishonourable to the character of the blessed Redeemer. But we not only are sure from the nature and reason of the thing, that if Christ preached at all to the spirits in prison, he must have preached the Gospel, for it would have been unworthy of his character to have descended into the lowest parts of the earth, to increase the misery of the sufferers; but we find it revealed that the Gospel was preached to the dead, and we are told the design for which it was preached, which I shall endeavour to consider in the next Lecture.

St. Peter is so plain upon this subject, as not only to let us know in general that Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison, but he particularly informs us who they were, even the spirits that were sometime disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing. So that if we can give hearty credit to St. Peter's information, this very dark passage, as some are pleased to call it, is very clear, and gives us most exact intelligence of some things that otherwise we should have been entirely ignorant of.

The spirits to which our Saviour preached in prison, were the spirits of the inhabitants of the old world, who were disobedient and rebellious in the days of Noah, and were destroyed by the flood. This entirely overthrows the vain figment of the Church of Rome, who teaches her children to believe in direct contradiction to the Apostle, that the spirits in prison, to whom our Saviour preached, were the
souls

souls of the good and virtuous, who were confined in a place which they call *Limbo*, and who had long waited for his coming to refresh and release them. They allow that he preached to them, and released them all, and from that time *Limbo* has been without inhabitants; but they utterly deny that Christ ever did, or ever will, release one soul from hell. But however certain we may be that Christ visited and comforted the souls of the righteous, yet nothing can be more evident than that St. Peter had no allusion to them in these words, but to the wicked, *who were sometime disobedient*, and were cut off from the earth by the deluge, for their grievous transgressions. These were the spirits in particular that are mentioned by the Apostle, and by no means the spirits of the just, which certainly never were confined in prison. Oh! what a blessed thing it is for us to adhere to the Scriptures only in matters of faith and practice, without regarding the false glosses, and vain traditions of men!

I have sometimes revolved over in my mind, what could have been the reason of those spirits who were disobedient in the days of Noah being mentioned in particular, or why did our Lord direct his ministry to them more than others? The Scripture does not, that I know of, give a direct answer to this question. Nevertheless as we are sure that our Lord acts wisely and well in all that he doeth, we may search a little into the reason of things, and our conjectures may probably approach near to the truth in this case.

1. The

1. The immense and inconceivable numbers that were destroyed by the flood, may be one more reason why our Lord regarded them in particular, for supposing the inhabitants of the old world to have doubled once in fifty years : then at the end of the year 1650 (six years before the flood) they amounted to seventeen thousand one hundred and seventy-nine millions, eight hundred and sixty-nine thousand, one hundred and eighty-four persons, (17179,869,184,) which is considerably more than eighteen times the supposed number of the present inhabitants of the globe, and all these but eight persons were drowned. One generation did not then go off the stage as another came on ; for, but nine generations had died before the flood, amounting according to the above calculation only to one thousand and twenty-four persons ; and the inhabitants were doubling the thirty-fourth time when that disaster came. Oh, what amazing numbers were swept off at once ! among which were all the children which Adam begat in the two last centuries of his life, except they died younger than was common in those days. So that it will appear that those who some time were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, were almost all the inhabitants of the old world, and were so immense in their numbers, that they formed no inconsiderable part of all the human race, that had lived and died before our Saviour came into the world. And as these vast multitudes

tudes were all cut off at once in the same manner, and probably were much in the same state, therefore they might have been all humbled and subdued, and thus prepared to receive the Gospel from the mouth of our Lord.

2. The inhabitants of the old world had sinned much longer than any others ever shall, and had doubtless acquired a hardness and obduracy beyond any of the human race: and as they were the greatest sinners that had ever departed this life, they might be taken as fit subjects for our Saviour to try his mercy, and the power of his grace upon; and be set forth as examples to all the universe, and as the best proofs of his intention to restore and reconcile all things. And therefore as our Lord ordered his Gospel to be preached first to those who had been the chief of sinners on earth, even to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; so, by the same rule, he might choose to preach first to those unhappy spirits in prison, who had sinned the most grievously in this life. And if he preached deliverance to such as these, and brought his salvation nigh to them, there can be but little doubt, but that all mankind shall finally have the same blessings bestowed upon them. In this light the inhabitants of the old world were the most proper patterns, both of God's long suffering, and the abundant mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ, that could possibly have been chosen out of all the fallen race.

3. These spirits had been much longer in prison than any of all the miserable (except the few that

might have died before the flood;) they had been confined in darkness and misery almost two thousand and four hundred years. A long and dreadful period indeed; this was the just reward of a long life of sin: yet the very circumstance of their having been lying so long in painful imprisonment, might be one reason why Christ should regard them in particular; nor am I afraid to acknowledge that I believe this might be one inducement, for I find that when he was on earth in the flesh, the cases of those who had suffered long moved his pity. St. Luke informs us of “a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. And he laid his hands on her; and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.” And when the ruler of the synagogue was filled with indignation on the account of this miracle being wrought on the Sabbath, Jesus reproved him, saying, “Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox, or his ass from the stall and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?” St. Luke xiii. 11—16.

It is evident that our Saviour made her long infirmity one principal argument why he would release

release her without delay; and by this silenced his adversaries.

And let any person read attentively the fifth chapter of St. John's Gospel, and see whether any other reason can be given why Jesus healed one man, while he passed by a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, and withered, except his having been so long in that condition. See the words, "And a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?" St. John v. 5, 6.

Now since it is evident that our Lord while on earth took pity on this miserable object, so much the more for his having been very long in such a deplorable condition, who will presume to say, that Jesus had no regard to the long period which these spirits had been shut up in prison? For to me it appears reasonable, that he who on earth regarded one man amongst a multitude, because he knew that he had been long in that case, would certainly compassionate the deplorable situation of an immense and inconceivable number, who had been more than sixty times as long in a state, very probably more than a million times worse. He that took pity on the most miserable objects upon earth, and out of his infinite compassion relieved them, did not change his disposition by putting off his body, but remained the same; and it is reasonable to conclude

I 2

that

that if he descended into the prison to preach the Gospel to the prisoners there, he would conduct himself in some measure according to the same rules which he observed in the world, and would first regard those whose state was the most desperate, who had been longest in misery, and who were most sensible of their need of his mercy and compassion. And doubtless, in all these respects the sinners of the old world might be the most proper objects of the Saviour's infinite benevolence.

We may be quite satisfied that Jesus did what was fittest at that time to be done; and, though we should not have been able to discover the reasonableness of his conduct in this instance (as I trust we have) yet we might have been sure that he certainly would do all things well, and infinitely for the best.

I have yet to consider more particularly the preaching of Christ to the spirits in prison, the designs which he had therein, and the great effects produced thereby. But the farther discussion of these important subjects must unavoidably be reserved for another discourse. In the mean time let us heartily adore that God who never finally forsakes his creatures, but regards them as objects of his benevolence in their lowest and most miserable estate; who is good to all, whose tender mercies are over all his works; and who has declared that he *will not contend for ever, nor be always wrath*; lest the spirit should fail before him, and the souls which he hath made.

LECTURE XXXVI.

The Preaching of Christ to the Spirits in Prison, farther Proved and Considered; the Designs or Purposes for which the Gospel was Preached to the Dead, or Souls in a separate State. Some Popular Objections answered.

1 PET. iii. 19, 20.

BY WHICH ALSO HE WENT AND PREACHED TO THE SPIRITS IN PRISON; WHO SOMETIME WERE DISOBEDIENT, WHEN ONCE THE LONG SUFFERING OF GOD WAITED IN THE DAYS OF NOAH, WHILE THE ARK WAS A PREPARING.—iv. 6. FOR, FOR THIS CAUSE WAS THE GOSPEL PREACHED ALSO TO THEM THAT ARE DEAD, THAT THEY MIGHT BE JUDGED ACCORDING TO MEN IN THE FLESH, BUT LIVE ACCORDING TO GOD IN THE SPIRIT.

IN farther treating of the great subject that lies before me, I shall endeavour to search into what the Prophets have written upon it, and what the Apostles of our Lord, who certainly understood the matter well, have spoken or declared of the same.

It is a great pleasure, in such an uncommon, yet infinitely important subject, to be able to trace it both in the writings of the Prophets and Apostles;

for one passage throws light upon another, till by an assemblage of the whole, all doubt or uncertainty vanishes before the evidence of truth.

In the xxii Psalm, where the sufferings of Christ are set forth in such a moving manner, the glorious consequences thereof are mentioned, and particularly specified; they are several, and very important, and are as follow :

“ The meek shall eat and be satisfied ; they shall
 “ praise JEHOVAH that seek him, your heart shall
 “ live forever. All the ends of the world shall re-
 “ member and turn unto JEHOVAH ; and all the
 “ kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.
 “ For the kingdom is JEHOVAH’S ; and he is the go-
 “ vernor among the nations.”

These are glorious consequences of the death and sufferings of our Lord, but though very grand, they seem confined to the living, and therefore the Sacred Writer goes on, not only to speak of the subjection of all the living, but all the dead likewise.

“ All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and
 “ worship ; all they that go down to the dust shall
 “ bow before him, and none can keep alive his
 “ own soul.”

From these words we learn, that all the dead, as well as the living, are subject to his controul, and that all that go down to the dust, shall as certainly bow before him, as that all that eat on earth shall worship ; and these descriptions evidently include all mankind, that ever did or shall exist. *Bowing before him, seems*

as

as really to imply service, willing subjection, and adoration, as *worshipping*, and both intend nearly the same thing. See ver. 26, 27, 28, 29.

“The face of JEHOVAH is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.” Yet he does not abandon them, for the very next words ought to be rendered; “They crying, JEHOVAH heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.” See Psal. xxxiv. 16, 17.

It is true that those words are disguised to an English reader, by the addition, *The righteous*, which the translators have added, but no such words are found in the original, and the connexion shews that the wicked are intended, even the same who for their evil doings shall be cut off from the earth.

In the lxxxiii Psalm there seems to be dreadful imprecations denounced against the wicked, and there is a prayer that they might be cut off from among men, and become like dung upon the earth; and be consumed like stubble fully dry, or like the chaff before the wind, that they might be persecuted with the tempest, and be made afraid with the storm. But when the design of all is manifest, their faces are to be filled with shame, that they may seek the name of JEHOVAH. And the Psalmist prays for them to be confounded and troubled forever; yea, that they might be put to shame, and perish; that they might know that he “whose name alone is JEHOVAH, is the Most High over all the earth.” For so the words should be rendered.

The cvii Psalm seems to describe the case of lost souls, unhappy spirits in prison, and their deliverance from that gloomy state. "Such as sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron; because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the Most High: therefore he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and there was none to help. Then they cried unto JEHOVAH in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses. He brought them out of darkness, and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder. Oh that men would praise JEHOVAH for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! "For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder." Ver, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

These are described as being confined in darkness and in the shadow of death, bound in chains, under the severest afflictions, and this because of their rebellion against the words of God, and their contempt of the counsel of the Most High. They are placed out of the reach of all creature's help, and where no assistance can be had, except from him whom they have rejected, despised, and contemned. Every word here used seems to intimate that these sufferers were such as had passed their lives in rebellion and wickedness, and were justly punished for their sins; and that the design of their pains, was to bring down their hearts with labour,
that

that being humbled, they might cry to God, and implore the forgiveness of him whom they had offended. And as no created arm can help or save, God alone is able to deliver them out of their distresses. He can save them in whatever state they are cast into, and he can bring them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and can break their bands in sunder.

It appears evident to me, that those who live and die disobedient, are shut up as spirits in prison, where they suffer severely for their sins, and are punished for a long season; nevertheless there is a possibility of their deliverance, through the sufferings and intercession of Jesus; and to accomplish this great design towards the inhabitants of the old world, it appears that he went in person and preached the gospel unto them.

The Evangelical Prophet Isaiah, points out this glorious purpose among the rest, for which Jesus was ordained as a Mediator and Saviour.

“ I JEHOVAH have called thee in righteousness,
“ and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and
“ give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light
“ of the Gentiles : To open the blind eyes, to bring
“ out the prisoners from the prison, and them that
“ sit in darkness out of the prison house.” Chap.
xlii. 6, 7.

And the same grand designs are spoken of more at large in the xlix chapter, where the Prophet personates Christ in speaking. First, he speaks of his
having

having been called and chosen from the womb, and armed and prepared for the great purpose of redeeming Israel, whereby JEHOVAH shall be glorified. Then he complains that he had laboured in vain, and spent his strength for nought and in vain; but yet encourages himself that his work was with JEHOVAH, and his reward with his God. This prophecy alludes to his personal ministry on earth among the Jews, with such little apparent success. What abundant labours our Saviour employed to convert his own nation, and yet all seemed in vain!

But then (according to the marginal reading of the ~~5th~~ verse, which is the true sense of the original,) a glorious promise appears. "And now saith JEHOVAH that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob to him, Israel shall be gathered, and I shall be glorious in the eyes of JEHOVAH, and my God shall be my strength."

Here, the great event of the gathering and bringing Jacob and Israel to God is made certain, and promised to Christ for his encouragement and reward. And this was certainly a part of the joy that was set before him, that enabled him to endure the cross, and despise the shame; but the encouraging voice still continues, and a greater and more glorious promise succeeds the first, in comparison of which the other is called but a light or small thing, though very great in itself.

Ver. 6. "And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob,

“ Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I
 “ will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that
 “ thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the
 “ earth.”

It certainly appears by this verse that we understood the foregoing verse right, as a promise of the universal gathering and restoration of the tribes of Jacob and Israel, since that is here called *a light thing*, which certainly implies that it should be accomplished, and far greater things besides. He shall not only raise up the tribes of Jacob, and bring them to God, and restore Israel, but shall be a light to the Gentile nations, and be a Saviour, or salvation, to the inhabitants of the world at large. In the two following verses the great promise is amplified, and drawn out at large, for the encouragement of the Saviour in his arduous work, and bitter sufferings.

Ver. 7, 8. “ Thus saith JEHOVAH, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers: kings shall see, and arise; princes also shall worship; because of JEHOVAH, that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. Thus saith JEHOVAH, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages.”

Thus

Thus far the Saviour's work towards all the living is described, for *the people, the tribes of Jacob, and the preserved of Israel, and the Gentiles, and the ends of the earth*, comprehend all the inhabitants of the world, and the glories of his millennial reign are hinted at, in those declarations that *kings shall see and arise*; and *princes also shall worship*, and that he shall *cause to inherit the desolate heritages*.

Then one of the great designs is mentioned for which he went and shewed himself to the spirits in prison. Ver. 9, 10. "That thou mayest say to the
 " prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness,
 " Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and
 " their pastures shall be in all high places. They
 " shall not hunger, nor thirst, neither shall the heat
 " nor sun smite them; for he that hath mercy on
 " them shall lead them, even by the springs of water
 " shall he guide them,"

These are glorious words, and if they mean any thing, they evidently refer to our dear Saviour's going and preaching the Gospel to the spirits in prison, and the glorious effects that followed the same. They no longer remained disobedient, but having heard the word of salvation, and the divine command, *Go forth*; they believed, obeyed, and were set at liberty, and were brought into a state of happiness and refreshment; expressed by their being delivered from hunger and thirst, the pains of heat, and the violent rays of the sun; and by their feeding
 in

in the ways, and having pastures in all high places, and being led and guided to the springs of water, by the hand of their Redeemer, who hath mercy on them.

These words are so much like those in Rev. vii. that I cannot help supposing that in both places they relate to the same, or to similar events, even to the actual release of prisoners out of the dark regions of horror and misery. The Apostle having beheld the hundred forty and four thousand sealed, and heard their number, says, "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

It is evident that these were not the elect or chosen, who are but few, and a certain sealed number, which the Apostle heard numbered; but these were a countless multitude, which no man could number. This multitude was composed of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, not even excepting those nations and people that were wholly cut off and destroyed for their transgressions; as the inhabitants of the old world, who perished by water, Sodom and Gomorrah, &c. who were destroyed by fire and brimstone; the Egyptians, who

who perished in their land by the ten plagues, and Pharaoh and his army, who were overthrown in the Red-Sea; the seven nations of the land of Canaan, whom God cast out before the children of Israel for their abominable wickedness; Amalek, of whom God swore that he would blot out their name and remembrance from under Heaven; and many other nations, whom God threatened utterly to destroy from off the earth, are included in this description of *all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues*. And we are obliged to view the words of the royal Psalmist in the same extensive manner, or else they can hardly be justified. “All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O JEHOVAH; and shall glorify thy name.” Psalm lxxxvi. 9. Now we are certain that God made those nations which he hath utterly destroyed, as well as those who are now in existence, and we are assured that during their continuance on earth, they never came and worshipped before him, nor glorified his name; and therefore, if the words are true, they must be accomplished after this life is past.

And not only does David mention *all nations*, but *all the kings of the earth*, those most haughty and stubborn men; and surely if ever these shall come to praise God, there can be no doubt of their subjects. “All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O JEHOVAH,

“JEHOVAH, when they shall hear the words of thy
 “mouth. Yea, they shall sing in the ways of
 “JEHOVAH, for great is the glory of JEHOVAH.”
 Psalm cxxxviii. 5, 6.

These numerous nations and people which St. John beheld, who formed the great multitude were not able to sing the new song of the elect or first fruits, for “No man could learn that song but the
 “hundred and forty and four thousand, who were
 “redeemed from the earth. These were redeemed
 “from among men, being the first fruits unto God
 “and to the Lamb.” See Rev. xiv. 3, 4.

The words of this new song are found in chap. v. 9, 10. “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to
 “open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and
 “hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of
 “every kindred, and tongue, and people, and na-
 “tion: And hast made us unto our God, kings and
 “priests; and we shall reign on the earth.”

This new song, the Church of the First Born, the first fruits unto God and the Lamb, those who are redeemed from among men, and from the earth can sing; but the great multitude cannot sing this song; they can cry “Salvation to our God, who sitteth
 “upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.” They are saved or restored by the grace of God, through the blood of the Lamb, and ascribe their redemption to the same source as the others, who can sing notes which these can never learn.

The

The angels who rejoice at the conversion of one sinner, are represented by St. John, as giving great glory and praise to God at the recovery of this vast multitude, as it is but reasonable to conclude they will.

“ And all the angels stood round about the throne
 “ and about the elders and the four living crea-
 “ tures, and fell before the throne on their faces,
 “ and worshipped God, saying, Amen ; blessing, and
 “ glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and ho-
 “ nour, and power, and might be unto our God for
 “ ever and ever. Amen.”

It is no wonder that all the holy Angels should tune their golden harps, and strike up a full chorus in all the seven sounds of heavenly harmony, to praise God, when they beheld the redemption of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues. This is the highest source of joy to all Angels above, and God forbid that it should be received with murmuring and discontent here on earth. And yet, astonishing as it is, this doctrine has been more hated and persecuted than any that ever was proclaimed on earth ; and frequently by those from whom we might expect better things ; the more is the pity.

“ And one of the elders, answered, saying unto
 “ me, what are these which are arrayed in white
 “ robes ? and whence came they ? And I said unto
 “ him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said unto me,
 “ these are they who came out of great tribulation,
 “ and

“ and have washed their robes, and made them
“ white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are
“ they before the throne of God, and serve him day
“ and night in his temple ; and he that sitteth on the
“ throne shall dwell among them. They shall
“ hunger no more, neither thirst any more ; neither
“ shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For
“ the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne
“ shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living
“ fountains of waters ; and God shall wipe away all
“ tears from their eyes.” See Rev. vii. 9—17.

How exceeding similar these words are to those of the Prophet Isaiah ! He declares that God, “ will
“ swallow up death in victory ;” and that “ Adonai
“ JEHOVAH will wipe away tears from off all faces.” Chap. xxv. 8. And that the prisoners whom Christ should liberate from the dark prison, should not hunger, nor thirst ; neither should the heat nor the sun smite them ; because he, the Saviour of mankind, who hath mercy on them, shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.

It is in vain to pretend, as some do, that the great multitude of all nations, &c. who came out of great tribulation, were the martyrs ; nothing can be more absurd, for a great number of these nations never had any of the martyrs of Jesus among them ; the martyrs shall reign with Christ on the earth during the millenium, and shall be capable of singing the new song, which this great multitude can never learn. The martyrs are among the chosen, called

and faithful, and consequently are included in the general assembly and church of the first born; and besides, the Apostles, who suffered as much, or more than any ever did on earth, reckoned their afflictions but light, transient and momentary; *our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a glory far exceeding aionion.* 2. Cor. iv. 17. But the great multitude which St. John beheld, standing before the throne, *came out of great tribulation*; they had been in the dark prison, where the tribulation is severe, great, and long; for nothing on earth is worthy of the name of *great tribulation*, compared with the miseries which the spirits in prison endure.

Thus it appears from these passages, that our Lord went into the prison that he might proclaim, and bring deliverance to the captives; this was a part of his divine commission, as the words of this Prophet farther declare. Chap. lxi. 1, 2. "The spirit of JEHOVAH God is upon me, because JEHOVAH hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."

If it be acknowledged that Christ went and preached deliverance to the spirits in prison, then here is a glorious prophecy of that event; and it is hardly to be supposed that such an astonishing part of the process of Christ should be omitted by the Prophets, when they spake of the more minute circumstances

cumstances attending his birth, life, death and burial. And it seems evident that the Prophets spake much more particularly and fully of Christ's preaching to the prisoners in the prison, and setting them free by his blood and conquering power, than they did of his resurrection itself; for that event is only plainly mentioned but once, that I can find, viz. in psalm xvi. but the deliverance of these captives seems frequently to be in their view, and they often speak of it, or plainly allude thereto.

What else can be the meaning of psalm lxviii. 18. "Thou hast ascended on high, *thou hast led captivity captive*; thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that JEHOVAH God might dwell among them?" What can be intended by his leading *captivity captive*, unless we understand the words as intimating that he overcame the powers of darkness, death and hell, who had led men captive at their will, and held their souls in bondage and misery, and that he rescued and brought back those unhappy prisoners held by them in chains of the most bitter slavery? Is not this the native idea of leading *captivity captive*? See how the words are used in Judges, v. 12. "Awake, awake, Deborah; awake, awake, utter a song; arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam."

How did Barak lead his captivity captive, but by conquering Sisera and his host, and thus ransoming the captive Israelites, which were held in bondage

by their enemies? And thus Christ conquered his enemies, and brought back their captives in triumph, as the trophies of his victory over them; and also led them in chains, who had held men in subjection to their tyranny and usurpation.

And thus Dr. Watts expresses himself upon this sublime subject in his imitation of the Psalms.

“Ye heav’nly gates, your leaves display,
 “To make the Lord, the Saviour way :
 “Laden with spoils from earth and hell,
 “The conqu’ror comes with God to dwell.”

Pfal. xxiv.

And again,

“How bright the triumph none can tell,
 “When the rebellious powers of hell,
 “That thousand souls had captives made,
 “Were all in chains like captives led!”

Pfal. lxviii.

But it would be but very little satisfaction to unhappy captives, to see a powerful conqueror come and lead their barbarous masters captives, in chains of triumph, unless his victory operated for their release. And therefore reason joins with revelation to prove that the prey was *taken from the mighty, and the lawful captives delivered* by him who is called “JE-
 “HOVAH, strong and mighty; JEHOVAH, mighty
 “in battle.” Pfal. xxiv. 7.

“Thus

“ Thus saith JEHOVAH, Even the captives of the
 “ mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the
 “ terrible shall be delivered.” Isaiah xlix. 25.

This was done when our Lord descended into the lowest parts of the earth, which it was necessary for him to do, before he could ascend into the highest heavens, as St. Paul declares, “ Wherefore he saith,
 “ When he ascended up on high, he led captivity
 “ captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that he
 “ ascended, What is it but that he also descended
 “ first into the lower parts of the earth? He that de-
 “ scended is the same also that ascended up far above
 “ all heavens, that he might fill all things.” Ephes.
 iv. 8, 9, 10.

It is plain from these words that he descended into the lower parts of the earth, that he might conquer his powerful enemies, and take their captives from them; and that it was absolutely necessary that he should first descend into the lower parts of the earth, in order to ascend above all heavens, and lead captivity captive. And to the Colossians, the same Apostle writes thus, “ And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly,
 “ triumphing over them in it.” Col. ii. 15.

How could he spoil these principalities and powers, and triumph over them in such a glorious and open manner, but by weakening their power, and liberating their prisoners? I leave it to any reasonable, candid person, acquainted with the nature of wars, conquests, victories and triumphs, whether the

idea of spoiling principalities and powers, does not most naturally imply the actual deliverance of their captives and prisoners, as well as the destruction of their empire and dominion ; and would not the argument be conclusive in any other case ?

And if it would not be proper to say, that a conqueror had spoiled his enemies, and triumphed over them, if he had left all their slaves and captives in their possession, and had brought no trophies of victory out of their land ; much less ought we to say that Christ spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly, unless he actually had brought forth the prisoners out of the prison, and ransomed the hopeless captives from their miserable state.

The Prophet Zechariah speaks of this glorious event, as well as Isaiah : “ As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.” Zech. ix. 11. These words are addressed by the Eternal Father to Jesus Christ, the glorious Saviour of mankind, and shew that it is through the blood of Christ that the prisoners are released from the dreadful pit, where not a drop of water can be found to cool their tongues.

This pit is doubtless the same with the prison mentioned by St. Peter, and can be no other place but hell itself, where no comfort or pleasure can be found ; where there is judgment without mercy ; a state of dreadful and constant misery, where no relief,

lief, except from the Lord alone, can possibly come. Yet even from this sad dark place of despair, the blood of the Saviour hath power to deliver those prisoners whom he hath purchased.

So that it evidently appears that Christ Jesus went and preached to the spirits in prison, that he might cause them to go forth, and we have abundant reason to believe that he did not preach to them in vain. For Jesus had all power in his hand; power over all flesh; power over all spirits; and over death and hell.

And he said to St. John the Divine, "Fear not; I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Rev. i. 17, 18. If Christ hath the keys of hell and of death, then he hath power to open and shut at his pleasure; "he openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." Rev. iii. 7.

As this is the case, there is no impossibility of the spirits in prison being delivered from their confinement; for Christ had full power both over them, and over their prison, and he could therefore make them obedient, and could also open their prison doors, and give them enlargement. "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living." Rom. xiv. 9.

All are equally subject to his controul, and there is no reason to suppose that his grace cannot reach them, but directly the contrary. It would tend to depreciate the character of our Lord and Saviour, to suppose any misery too great for him to relieve; but on the other hand, to affirm that he is able to deliver his creatures from the lowest state of distress, is doing him the highest honour.

It is matter of great joy and satisfaction, that "He that is our God, is the God of Salvation; and unto God JEHOVAH belong the issues from death." Psal. lxxviii. 20. He that can cast soul and body into hell, is able to bring them up again; for he hath power to restore, as well as to destroy. "See now that I, even I am he, and there is no God with me; I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand." Deut. xxxii. 39. And Hannah saith in her song, "JEHOVAH killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, or hell, and bringeth up." 1 Sam. ii. 6.

There can be no part of the creation to which the power of God doth not extend; and therefore Jesus having all power and dominion given to him, in heaven and in earth, was well qualified and authorized to go and preach the gospel to the spirits in prison, and to bring them out of the same.

Having just briefly traced this great subject through the writings of the Prophets and Apostles,
I shall

I shall return again to the words of St. Peter, which I have chosen as the foundation of these discourses.

If we had no other authority but that of this Apostle, we should have sufficient evidence to believe that Christ actually went and preached to the spirits in prison, and that they became obedient to his instructions; but the united testimony of so many Scriptures upon the same subject, gives us more confidence in this matter than we could have asked, or even hoped for.

I have said much on these passages in Lecture xxv. and therefore need not enlarge so much here; you may read at your leisure what is there said, and compare it with the Scriptures, and if it will bear the test of truth, receive it, and if not reject it. I desire nothing but that the truth may prevail; and the will of God respecting his creatures be made known.

I shall consider the great foundation that our Lord Jesus had to go upon in his preaching to the spirits in prison.

1. They to whom he went and preached, were the creatures of God, formed in his image, and capable of happiness.

2. They were the prisoners of Christ, his own property, created by him, preserved by him, and were given him by the Father, on purpose that he might redeem them.

3. If Christ died for all men, as the Scriptures declare, then he certainly died for those lost souls,
as

as well as the rest of the human race; and if he died for all, then it was but reasonable that even the spirits in prison, should know that he died for them, and that he had made it possible for them to be restored, or otherwise he might as well not have died for them at all.

Now if he loved them so well as to die for them, as he certainly did, if he died for all, and that he died for all is true, except the Scripture is false; and if his death for them was not in vain, and surely Christ did not die in vain, or to no purpose; then it will follow, that his death made their deliverance possible; and it was infinitely worthy of him to go and carry the gospel to them, and let them know what he had done and suffered for them, and the great benefits that he had procured for them. So that it will appear that he had good ground to go upon, in that marvellous work of preaching to the spirits in prison.

But who can imagine how wonderfully the glorious Redeemer preached unto these lost souls? He that on earth spake as *never man spake*; and taught mankind *as one that had authority*, must have spoken with great clearness, power and majesty, in the prison; but what the words were, we are not informed, farther than in general that he *preached the gospel*, and proclaimed *good news, glad tidings of great joy*, such as *deliverance to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that were bound*. There is however no reason to doubt but he was successful in his preaching, for
he

he had authority to say to the prisoners, *Go forth*; and to them that were in darkness, *Shew yourselves*. And it being particularly noticed that these spirits in prison, *were some time disobedient*, supposes that they were no longer so, as I have sufficiently observed in my xxvth Lecture, where I have brought several instances of the use of the words *sometimes were*, and in every place the expression clearly implies that the state so described, was then perfectly past. And this I believe is a general rule, both in Scripture and common language, without exception. Thus it may be concluded, that however disobedient these spirits were in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, they were obedient to the preaching of Christ when he carried the gospel to them in the prison, where they had been long confined in darkness and misery.

St. Peter goes on to tell us more plainly the great causes for which the gospel was preached to the *dead*, in opposition to the *quick*, viz. *that they might be judged according to men in the flesh*. The gospel was preached to the *dead also*, that they might be judged by it, as though they had heard it in the flesh; but as judgment is but a mean, and not an end, (as many suppose,) the Saviour had a more glorious design in preaching to them, viz. *that they might live according to God in the Spirit*. That being raised from their state of sin, death, darkness and misery, they might begin a new and eternal life in the spirit, according to the will of God, and to his praise and glory.—

This

This is living according to God in the Spirit; and I see no reason why such an important change may not take place upon disembodied spirits, as well as upon men in the flesh; for it is obvious, that it is the thinking and not the material part of man, that is the subject of spiritual life. And unless the Scripture has pronounced it impossible for any such change to take place upon the souls of men after death, (which I confess I can no where find) it is reasonable to suppose, that the God of Love and Power, both can and will work in this manner upon spirits departed.

The Scripture is indeed so far from declaring it impossible for souls thus to begin to live according to God after the death of the body, that this text declares the contrary, and assures us that the Gospel was preached to these spirits in prison whose bodies were dead, not only *that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but that they might live according to God in the spirit.*

This plain testimony seems sufficient to determine the point, and would infallibly do so with most who believe the Scriptures, were it not for long habits of thinking to the contrary, the traditions of their fathers' adherence to common received opinions, and a number of evasions that have been given as the meaning of these passages, contrary to their plain literal sense, and a variety of objections which are brought against the restoration after death in general, as well as against the exposition which I have given

given of these words in particular: some of which I shall notice, and then draw towards a close.

1. Some say that the doctrine held forth in these discourses is a kin to the Romish doctrine of purgatory; and this with some is a sufficient reason for rejecting it without a hearing. But do the Catholics believe no truth? or is it a sufficient reason for rejecting any doctrine, because they hold it? If so, we must reject the *being of God, the truth of divine revelation, the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ascension and intercession of Christ, and a future state of rewards and punishments*; for all these they believe.

But though I would never reject any truth because the Church of Rome believes it, yet I would by no means follow her as an infallible guide, neither in matters of faith nor practice; for if I had, I should never have dared to believe the doctrine of the *General Restoration*, which the *Roman Catholics* so bitterly condemn; for they anathematize all who hold it. And it is well known, that the Romanists persecuted the *merciful Doctors*, and their adherents, (for so those were called who believed in the *General Restoration*) and yet they could not wholly root them out and silence their testimony until the seventh century; and the same truth was soon revived after the Reformation began: so that the doctrine of the Restoration may truly, and by way of eminence, be called, a *Protestant Doctrine*, in opposition to the opinions and faith of the Church of Rome. The
Romish

Romish *purgatory* is only intended for the better sort of their own members, who do not die under the guilt of any mortal sin ; but all others are condemned to hell, from whence they declare there never was one delivered, nor never will be to all eternity, or so long as God exists. And as for these spirits in prison mentioned by St. Peter, they suppose them (as I have before observed) to be the spirits of the righteous, which were kept in *Limbo*, until the coming of Christ to preach to them, and release them ; which false notion is expressly contrary to the very words of the Apostle, for he declares that those to whom Christ preached, were the spirits of those who were disobedient in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing. Thus it may easily be made to appear that both the exposition of this passage, and the general doctrine which I would deduce therefrom, are entirely opposite to the decisions of the Church of Rome ; so that this objection vanishes at once.

Others say that this passage in St. Peter's epistle, is a very dark and obscure text, that it is difficult, if not impossible, to tell the meaning of it, and that it is not worth while to search after it.

At this rate all enquiry into the meaning of the Scriptures might be precluded, especially if any thing appeared a little dark and obscure. But the truth is, that this passage would neither appear dark nor difficult were it not that it is evidently contrary to most of the systems that are commonly believed ;
and

and therefore, as they are determined not to give them up, they call this text *dark*, and that *difficult*, and the other *obscure*, and a fourth *very hard to be understood*, and a fifth *of no great consequence to them*; and when they are desired to give the meaning, they will either refuse, and give none at all, or else something that is mere evasion, and nothing to the purpose.

This text, for instance, if it be suffered to speak its own language, and people will lay aside prejudice, and attachment to pre-conceived systems, and understand the words in their obvious sense, is plain enough, and far from being dark, throws amazing light upon the subject, and shews how the ancient prophecies of Christ's preaching *liberty to the captives*, and *the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound*, were fulfilled when Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison, who sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing.

And oh! how excellent and plain, and worthy of a God the causes were for which the Gospel was preached by our Saviour to the dead, or spirits in prison, who are distinguished from those whose bodies are alive, and who are called *quick*! even *that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit*. Christ, who is ordained to be the judge of *quick* and *dead*, preached to both *quick* and *dead*, and he is able to save or restore both *quick* and *dead*.

All

All this is plain and easy, until men come with their subtile evasions, and false criticism, and endeavour to puzzle and darken the plain literal sense. Then we are first told, that St. Peter had no intention to inform us that Christ by his spirit, went in person and preached to the Spirits in prison; but that the Spirit of God in Noah, preached to the inhabitants of the old world, who in the time of St. Peter, were spirits shut up in the prison of Hell without remedy, hope or possibility of deliverance.

But why St. Peter should, when speaking of the death and resurrection of Christ, take such a sudden and surprising leap, to speak of Noah's preaching to the old world, I believe it would be hard to tell. For to say the least, it was nothing to the purpose that he was then upon, unless he meant to speak of some transaction subsequent to the death of Christ, and performed by himself. If he had only intended to inform us that it was the Spirit of Christ that assisted the ancient preachers of righteousness to instruct and warn mankind, he need not have gone up as far as Noah, but might have found abundance of instances in the Prophets, as much to the purpose, and nearer hand. And if he only really intended to inform us of the preaching of Noah to the people of the old world, could he not have informed us of it in so perspicuous a manner as to have left no room for mistake? Could he not have said, 'Noah in his time, being assisted by the Spirit of Christ, preached to the inhabitants of the old world; but they, being
' disobedient

‘ disobedient, were destroyed by the flood, and are
 ‘ now spirits in prison, where they must always re-
 ‘ main?’

Was it not as easy to have written in this manner, if this was all that he intended, as in the manner that he has written? And ought he not to have spoken perspicuously on this head? But he uses those expressions that would naturally make us conclude that Christ himself took a journey to the prison, to preach to the prisoners there; for the same original word is taken to express the journey, as is used in chap. iii. ver. 22, for his ascent into Heaven, which was certainly a real remove from one place to another.

St. Peter also distinguishes the times and dispensations, one he calls *the long suffering of God, that waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing*; and the other the spirit of Christ, *by which also he went and preached to the Spirits in prison*. If here are not the plainest marks of distinction between the times and dispensations, then I confess I am not able to understand the subject.

The different success of the long suffering of God, which waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, from that which attended the preaching of Christ, is evidently intimated by the expression, *who sometime were disobedient*; for this always signifies that the time spoken of is perfectly past. The different state of the auditors, when Christ preached to them, from that which they were in when the long

suffering of God waited upon them is plain. In the days when God's long suffering waited upon them, they were men in the flesh; "And JEHOVAH said, "My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that "he is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and "twenty years." Gen. vi. 3.

Thus we are certain that they were men in the flesh when God's long suffering waited upon them; but when Christ went and preached unto them they were *spirits in prison, and dead*, in distinction from *quick*.

Some would fain endeavour to persuade us, that the *dead* mentioned in 1 Pet. iv. 6. are not the same with the spirits in prison spoken of in the foregoing chapter, ver. 19, 20.

I have seen three different and contrary opinions concerning these *dead*; one is, that the morally or spiritually dead are intended, and not the naturally dead; but it is a full answer to this evasion, that as the word *quick* intends those whose bodies are alive, so the word *dead*, as set in opposition thereto, must necessarily intend those whose natural lives have come to an end.

Another strange notion that I have seen in a late pamphlet, is, that the dead mentioned in chap. iv. 6; are the Saints of God, who are dead to sin, dead to the world, dead to the law, and alive to God; but it is needless to spend any time, in confuting so absurd and forced an evasion; for I cannot call it an interpretation; for besides the word *dead* being set in opposition

position to *quick*, (which is enough to determine the sense) the intentions of the Gospel being preached to the *dead*, are quite contrary to the idea of their being *living Saints*, viz. *That they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit*. For if they are both *men in the flesh*, and already live *according to God in the Spirit*, what need is there that the Gospel should be preached unto them to accomplish these purposes?

Another evasion is, that the Gospel was preached to them that are dead while they lived in the world, that they might be judged, &c. but what strange news would this be? It would be trifling to say this, that some now dead had the Gospel also preached to them, while they were yet alive, for this would be no more than to say *the Gospel was also preached to men*, &c.

All these pains are taken to evade the natural import of the discourse of the Apostle upon this subject; for he did not write his epistle in chapters and verses, as some seem to imagine. The subject which he began in chap. iii. he continued on without changing, until he had finished what he had to say, and he had none of these unnatural divisions in his mind when he wrote, nor should we when we read. Nothing need be more plain than that St. Peter intended by the *dead*, the same as the spirits in prison: and so it is evident the learned understand the matter, for all Bibles that have marginal notes refer both from chap. iv. 6. to chap. iii. 19, 20.

The Apostle having informed us that Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison, and having also told us who these unhappy prisoners were, he continues his discourse, until we learn the great designs of our Saviour in preaching the Gospel to them; for the Apostle must be supposed to refer to something which he said just before, and if he did not refer to what he had said respecting our Lord's going and preaching to the spirits in prison, it is impossible for us to say what he did refer to.

I shall dwell no longer upon these evasions, but shall just notice two or three objections more that are sometimes urged against this system, before I conclude.

The first that I shall mention is, That this way of restoration is said to depreciate and make void the efficacy of the blood of Christ. But surely, after what I have already said, I need not make much reply to such an objection as this, so evidently false: for unless asserting that a remedy instead of curing a few diseases in certain states, is able to cure all without exception, in whatever state, is depreciating and setting it at nought, I cannot be charged with depreciating the blood of Christ. Instead of limiting its power and efficacy to a few persons, and to a short moment of time, I extend it to all persons, and to all periods of their existence, till the dreadful disorder, sin, shall be entirely removed from them all, and the works of the Devil wholly destroyed. And if it is depreciating the blood of Christ, to affirm
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that its redeeming power is ten thousand times more extensive, ten million times greater than is commonly believed, and instead of its virtue lasting for a moment, that it endures for a thousand ages, even until sin, sorrow, pain and misery, shall be no more; I say, if this is depreciating and setting it at nought, then I confess myself guilty of the charge, and hope in this way to depreciate it while I live; and if this is to be vile, I will be yet more vile.

If, on the contrary, they who make the objection, were to be fairly tried, would they not be found justly chargeable, with the very thing they condemn? Let the adversaries of this doctrine themselves be judges. For who most magnifies and extols the merits and virtue of the Saviour's blood, those who limit its effects to a small moment, and its extent to a very few; or those who proclaim its power and virtue unbounded, both as to subjects and seasons, extending through all ages, and to all persons? As for those who are shut up in the pit where there is no water, it is expressly declared that by the blood of the Messiah's covenant, which is his own blood, they are sent forth out of that most hopeless and deplorable state. And those who came out of great tribulation, washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. And it must be confessed that if men are delivered out of the dark prison of Hell, they are as wholly delivered by the free grace of God, and the blood of Jesus, as it is possible that any souls can be; for surely they are most mi-

serable and wretched, and have nothing in themselves to recommend them to the divine favour. And therefore their restoration will redound in the highest manner to the praise and glory of God, and the honour of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour; and consequently is so far from setting at nought his blood and merits, that its native tendency is exactly the contrary in the highest possible degree. After what I have said, I shall take no further notice of those who charge me with depreciating the blood of Christ; they must be wilfully blind, and in a kind of spiritual insanity. For would not those be looked upon as mad, who should charge a person with depreciating the virtues of a remedy, only because he exalted them a thousand times more than themselves? This perfectly applies to the present case; for as I fully believe that Christ shed his blood for all the dead, as well as for all the living, I therefore must suppose it has power and merit sufficient actually to redeem them all at last; and though its process is slow it is sure.

“ Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood

“ Shall never lose its pow’r,

“ ’Till all the ransom’d of our God

“ Are sav’d, to sin no more.”

There is another objection commonly made, which though it has little or no foundation in Scripture, is so rooted by long tradition in the minds of men, that
it

it is almost an insuperable bar in the way of their receiving the doctrine of the General Restoration; and that is, that after death there can be no alteration, to all eternity. If this were true, it would infallibly overthrow the whole system of the Restoration; but as I have already fully answered this objection, both in my Dialogues, and in Lecture xxv. I need not take up your time further upon this head. The very intention of these discourses is to answer this common objection, and to lay a firm foundation for the belief of the contrary; and as I have brought the corner stones of this fabric from the sure word of God, and have laid them upon the rock even Christ, trust the building will stand, against all the waves of opposition. It would almost render the whole work and sufferings of the Saviour void, and of none effect, if no change could possibly take place upon the souls of men after the death of their bodies; but on the contrary, allow that God has power over all in every state, and it enlarges our ideas, and magnifies the plan of salvation ten thousand fold more than any other scheme could possibly do. I therefore leave it to the serious consideration of the candid and unbiassed.

A few questions that have been asked upon some points relating to this subject deserve some short answers.

Quest. 1. Did not Christ say to the penitent thief, (Luke xxiii. 43.) “ Verily I say unto thee, to day
“ shalt thou be with me in Paradise ?” and how is

this consistent with his going and preaching to the spirits in prison?

I answer, that it is perfectly consistent; for he could easily first visit the regions of peace, called Paradise, where the souls of the righteous were placed, and comfort them, and then he might pass over into the prison, the realms of darkness, horror and despair, and preach the Gospel to the prisoners that had so long dwelt in the house of woe and pain. So that his first visiting *Paradise*, was not in the least inconsistent with his going afterwards into *Gehenna*.

Quest. 2. But is it not said, (St. Luke xvi. 26.)

“ And besides all this, between us and you there is
 “ a great gulph fixed; so that they who would pass
 “ from hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass
 “ to us that would come from thence?” how then could Christ go and preach to the spirits in prison, since there was an impassible gulph between the regions of Paradise, and those of Gehenna?

Answer. However impossible it was for the spirits of men, to pass from one of these habitations to the other, yet it could not be impossible to him, who is the universal Lord of all, and who has the keys of Hell and of Death. It was part of the glorious honour reserved for our great deliverer, that he should break *the gates of brass, and cut asunder the bars of iron*; that he should open the prison doors, and proclaim liberty to the captives.

None

None but he could open the kingdom of Heaven to believers, for the gates of the heavenly city were shut against all mankind, until Christ had overcome the sharpness of death; and certainly none but he could burst the bars of the prison, and loose the bands of death and hell; but as to him nothing is impossible, he was able to pass that gulph, which to all others was absolutely impassible. And it is certain that he did pass it, or he could not have gone and preached to the spirits in prison, which is a sufficient answer to this question.

Quest. 3. If Christ died for all men, why are any sent to hell?

It might as well be asked, Why, since Christ died and suffered for his elect, they should ever feel sin, sorrow, pain, misery or death? If the righteous endure such amazing afflictions in this world, before they can be restored to the bosom of their father, as to make it true that they are scarcely saved, the same reason will hold good, why the ungodly, wicked and sinners, must necessarily suffer great torments in the world or age to come, before their restoration can take place; but the miseries which transgressors shall endure in a future state, no more prove that God is *not* the restorer of all men, than the sore afflictions which his saints bear in this life, prove that he *is not especially* the restorer of them that believe.

If salvation is described as that which absolutely prevents our feeling evil, then I may say, that no fallen creature

creature ever was or ever can be saved. But if salvation or restoration be a deliverance out of miseries already felt, then I see no reason why all may not really share in it at last. And if the greater the misery is out of which any are delivered, the greater and more wonderful their salvation is esteemed, and the grace of God is so much the more praised and honoured; then certainly the restoration of lost souls out of hell, may afford the greatest and most various displays of free grace and redeeming love, that can possibly be conceived; and the highest glory and honour may thereby redound to his holy name, all which, according to the common systems, he must forever lose. So that the doctrine of *endless damnation*, under pretence of honouring the justice of God, in reality robs him of almost the whole of his glorious character, and deprives him of shewing that infinite variety in the kingdom of grace, which he has done in the kingdoms of nature and providence; and prevents him from manifesting many thousands of millions of the most surprizing instances of mercy and goodness that can be thought of. And thus limits the happiness of creatures to a millionth part of what it might be, and greatly circumscribes the glory of God.

While the plan of the Universal Restoration leaves room for the most unbounded displays of the Divine perfections, and the most inconceivable and universal happiness of intelligences; and is therefore infinitely to be preferred before all other systems.

Quest.

Quest. 4. Is it probable that all those who perished by the flood, were restored by Christ, and delivered through the Gospel which he preached to them, at the time mentioned by St. Peter? I think it is probable they all were, at least there is nothing in Scripture that I know of to the contrary. The expression, *Who sometime were disobedient*, implies, that they became obedient to the preaching of Christ; and if the purposes or causes for which the Gospel was preached unto them were accomplished, viz. *That they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit*; then we are sure they were delivered. Not so the inhabitants of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and the cities of the plain, who perished by fire and brimstone from Heaven, they are to be condemned in the Day of Judgment; though they shall have a more tolerable punishment than the inhabitants of the cities where our Saviour's mighty works were wrought. Yet even the long captivity of the inhabitants of Sodom, &c. shall at last be returned, as has been proved in a former Lecture.

Quest. 5. Did Christ preach to the spirits in prison only between the time of his death and resurrection, or during the forty days after his resurrection, before his ascension into heaven?

It makes no odds as to the general doctrine of his really preaching to the dead, or spirits in prison; whether we understand the time to be between his death and resurrection, or between his resurrection

resurrection and ascension, or both. I have commonly supposed from the words of St. Peter, that he preached to the disembodied spirits in prison, during the time that he himself was disembodied; Mr. White, in his Treatise on the Restoration of all Things, concludes that it was during the forty days between his resurrection and ascension, by which he thinks we can better account for the manner in which he employed the time during that period.

What he says is worthy of attention, and if this Lecture had not been so long, I had intended to read what he hath written upon this subject. It is not inconsistent to suppose that our Lord might preach to the spirits in prison after his resurrection, as well as before; but at what time soever he preached to them, the fact itself seems evident, and the designs were glorious, worthy of a God, and were doubtless fulfilled; and this is sufficient for our learning and comfort.

Quest. 6. Is it to be concluded that the Lord Jesus still continues to restore and redeem lost souls, out of their state of sin and misery, in the same manner as he did the inhabitants of the old world, during this intermediate season, or the time between his ascension, and his coming to reign on the earth?

I am persuaded that it is the case, and that numbers are, and shall be subdued and restored between their death and the general judgment, and to such the book of life shall be opened at the general or second Resurrection, and their names shall be found
written

written therein at that time, though they were not found therein at their departure out of the world, for had that been the case, they would have been brought with Christ, and would have had a part in the first Resurrection.

Many other curious questions may doubtless be started, but these I have heard asked, and therefore have just noticed them briefly, I have endeavoured to follow the sense of the Scriptures sincerely without varying therefrom in these answers.

I confess respecting this last question, I have had great satisfaction from the testimony of a very particular friend of mine, and one of the best men that I am acquainted with, as far as I can judge. He was sick of a confirmed *Consumption*, and in his own apprehension, and to the view of all around him, died, and lay in that situation, forty-one hours, and when he appeared to begin again to live, he found himself in his coffin, and the people were assembled to his funeral. During the time of his absence, he beheld most wonderful things, and especially the Restoration of a number of lost souls. He has given me a brief relation of what he saw and heard from the time of his departure, till he returned again to the body; with a charge however, not to publish it during his life time. But I have nevertheless given copies of it to some of my friends, and all that have heard, seen or read the same, agree that it is one of the most glorious and wonderful relations of the kind, that was ever made known.

And

And those who are acquainted with the venerable and pious relator, can hardly entertain the least doubt of the truth of the relation. For besides a long life of piety, uprightness, and benevolence, that which gives great weight to his evidence, is, that he may be reckoned truly a martyr, having been about thirty-four times in prison, and was once brought upon the scaffold to be beheaded, for preaching the Gospel in France ; and was within a minute of being executed, the executioner having the sword drawn for that purpose, and was just going to give the fatal blow, when the King of France sent a reprieve. His fellow prisoner, the Rev. *Mr. Durant*, having been hanged a few minutes before, for the same crime.

Nevertheless, I would not wish to build my faith in these important articles on any testimony short of the Scriptures ; but when a man of his excellent character, solemnly assures me of the truth of a relation, not by hearsay, but from his own experience, and often confirms the testimony, giving it in writing under his own hand, and when I come to read and examine, I find it quite agreeable to what is written in the Bible, must I reject what he says ?— But in this unbelieving age, when the Scripture itself is set aside by many, I can hardly expect any man's testimony, how credible soever, should be received, especially when he speaks contrary to the commonly received opinions. “ If they (the people of this age) “ hear not Moses and the Prophets,
(Christ

(Christ and his Apostles, whose united evidence I have brought to support what I have advanced) "neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." St. Luke xvi. 31.

I trust it has been sufficiently proved from the Scriptures, that our Saviour went and preached the Gospel to the spirits in prison, (who sometime were disobedient,) and brought them out of their long and dreadful confinement. From this important and interesting intelligence, I venture, (and I hope without being guilty of presumption) to draw the following general conclusions.

That our Lord Jesus Christ will finally draw all men to himself, (St. John xii. 32) will give eternal life to all that the Father hath given him, (St. John xvii 2.) which are all things, and consequently, all men without exception. (St. John iii. 35. xiii. 3.)

That God will certainly according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, gather together in one, or re-head all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth, (Eph. i.—9, 10.) And that he will bring every knee to bow in the name of Jesus, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and bring every tongue to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. ii. 10,

And having made peace through the blood of his cross, will by him reconcile all things unto himself, whether

whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. (Col. i. 20.)

And that God will save all men, and bring them to the knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim. ii. 4.) since he is the Saviour or Restorer of all men, but especially of those that believe. (1 Tim. iv. 10.)

For it appears evident to me, that Jesus did not wholly and eternally give up, or abandon those most miserable spirits in prison, who were disobedient to the long suffering of God which waited upon them in the time that the ark was a preparing, but went and preached the Gospel to them for their recovery, he never will leave any of the human race, (for all of whom he shed his precious blood) until he shall have saved them compleatly from all their sins and miseries. Then the whole creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Then the morning stars shall sing together, and all the sons of God shall shout for joy. And the glorious JEHOVAH shall rejoice in all his works.

END OF THE THIRTY-SIXTH LECTURE.

LECTURE XXXVII.

THE HISTORY OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR, KING OF BABYLON.

He is considered as a most striking Figure of Lucifer, or the Chief Prince of the Fallen Angels ; in his Rebellion against God, Ambition, Tyranny, Pride, Cruelty, and Universal Dominion.

THE character which is now to be introduced to you, is on many accounts one of the most extraordinary that is mentioned in the Scriptures ; and his history is penned by the Holy Spirit with great care, more than could have been well expected, considering the great number, variety, and importance of the subjects treated of in the sacred pages.

It may not be improper to observe, that the great Messiah was not only prophesied of, but typified by living characters; thus Adam, as the parent and head of all mankind, is called *The figure of him that was to come.* Rom. v. 14. And St. Paul, in that chapter, and in 1 Cor. xv. draws a parallel in several instances, and a disparity in others, between Adam and Christ. Led by these hints, and being informed that “Whatsoever things were written aforetime
 “ were written for our learning, that we through
 “ patience and comfort of the Scriptures might
 “ have hope.” Rom. xv. 4. And finding also that the Apostle speaks of Abraham, Hagar, Ishmael, Sarah, and Isaac, (who were all real persons, and their history, as written by Moses, is certainly and literally true) as being an allegory, Hagar pointing out Mount Sinai, and the first covenant, and Sarah by parity of reasoning pointing out the new covenant, Ishmael the children of the one, and Isaac the free born sons of Zion: We have been apt to conclude that many other persons were also figurative or typical of Christ, besides those which are mentioned as such in the New Testament, on the account of a likeness between their characters and his. Thus Joseph was in a great variety of instances typical or figurative of Christ; and so was Moses; and doubtless many others, as Divines in general agree.

As it is granted that certain great, good, and eminent men, who really existed, and acted their parts
 upon

upon earth, were figures or types of him who was to come, even of Jesus, the friend and Saviour of Mankind; I am apt to conclude that great, eminent, wicked, powerful men, especially tyrannical kings and monarchs, were types and figures of Satan, the great adversary of God and man. In this light I am apt to consider *Nimrod*, *Pharaoh*, king of Egypt, *Sennacherib* king of Assyria, and the king of Tyros, spoken of in Ezek. xxviii. And especially *Nebuchadnezzar* the Great, king of Babylon. Him I have chosen as the subject of this and the following Lecture; (for reasons which will appear as we go on) and I shall proceed to point out his dispositions, character, and conduct, in various instances, as figurative and highly typical of Satan, the god of this age, the spirit that now ruleth in the hearts of the children of disobedience.

There is no doubt but *Nebuchadnezzar* had great natural abilities, which might have been employed to the best of purposes, had his will and mind been good; but as he was a rebel against his Creator, so he was also an enemy to man. And we have reason to conclude that *Lucifer*, the Chief Prince of fallen Angels, was one of the most mighty angels, that he was created with the greatest natural powers, and placed in a seat of the highest eminence, and was capable of being greatly useful to his fellow creatures, had he continued in proper subjection to his Maker. But rebelling against God, he is be-

come the greatest enemy to men, and seeks constantly to destroy, distress, and torment them by every mean in his power, either by secret influence or open force.

The first place we meet with the name of this celebrated Warrior in Scripture is in 2 Kings xxiv. 1. and the last time he is mentioned is in Dan. v. and between these places he is spoken of many scores, if not hundreds of times; and many traits of his character are given, out of which I shall select the following instances, in which he appears as a striking figure of Satan.

1. *His rebellion* against his great Creator. This wicked disposition, and most horrid crime, the foundation of all the rest, is abundantly evident from several passages of Scripture. But there is no instance in which the rebellion of Nebuchadnezzar against God appears more evident than in his setting up his image of gold in the plain of Dura, and commanding all people without distinction to fall down and worship the same, on pain of being cast into a burning fiery furnace. Of which such a particular account is given in Dan. iii.

It is a great instance of rebellion for any creature to refuse to worship God, but how much greater to seek to be worshipped himself? This did Nebuchadnezzar, and not only sought to be himself adored, but to have his image worshipped by all on pain of certain and cruel death. And when some of the servants of
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the true God, refused to fall down and worship his golden image, he was full of fury, and commanded to bring them into his presence, and then in his rage made a speech in which he may be said to have exceeded the Devil himself, concluding with these horrid words, "But if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace: AND WHO IS THAT GOD THAT SHALL DELIVER YOU OUT OF MY HANDS?"

Ver. 15.

In this speech he added insult to rebellion, and challenged the great JEHOVAH, who appeared in the behalf of his faithful servants, in a most miraculous manner, and disappointed the haughty tyrant, by saving those that chose to die the most cruel death, rather than to dishonour their God.

Any person may perceive, with the least reflection, that King Nebuchadnezzar in this part of his character greatly resembles Satan; for ever since that Prince of fallen Angels has cast off his allegiance to God, he has strove to transfer the honour due from creatures to the great Creator, to himself; and has fought in every possible way to obtain worship and adoration from all mankind. The greatest ambition of this arch fiend has always been to be worshipped as a God, either openly, or under some name, form, or image. And in this he has been, like Nebuchadnezzar, so successful, as to deceive almost the whole world, in all ages, and has had the malicious joy

not only of ruling in the hearts of all the children of disobedience, which have been almost the whole of the human race, but of being himself openly and professedly worshipped by almost all nations of the earth. Temples have been erected to him, altars have been consecrated, sacrifices have been offered to him, even the most costly sacrifices, human victims without number. The most valuable lives have often been taken away, in order to sacrifice body and soul to the Devil. All idolatry, or idol worship, is ultimately the worship of the Devil, and that in which he delighteth above measure. And the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, represent the heathen idolatry as the worship of Devils. David speaks of the children of Israel who learned to do after the abominations of the heathen, and says, “ They did not destroy the nations concerning whom JEHOVAH commanded them; but
“ were mingled among the heathen, and learned
“ their works. And they served their idols: which
“ were a snare unto them. Yea, they sacrificed
“ their sons and their daughters unto DEVILS, and
“ shed innocent blood, even the blood of their
“ sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed
“ unto the idols of Canaan: And the land was polluted with blood. Thus were they defiled with
“ their own works, and went a whoring with their
“ own inventions.” Psal. cvi. 34—39.

And

And St. Paul says, "What say I then? that the
 "idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sa-
 "crifice to idols is any thing? But, I say, that
 "the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sa-
 "crifice to DEVILS, and not to God: And I
 "would not that ye should have fellowship with
 "DEVILS. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord
 "and the cup of Devils: Ye cannot be partakers
 "of the Lord's table and the table of Devils."
 1 Cor. x. 19, 20, 21.

A volume might be written upon this subject, to prove from Scripture and history, that Satan has the highest ambition to be worshipped, and that in all ages he has stirred up his servants to persecute those few names that would not bow to his service, and adore him as their Lord and King. But one instance above all others shews the daring ambition and insolence of this Prince of Darkness in this respect, and that is, that he should not only tempt all men to adore him, but even the Lord Jesus Christ himself, the Lord of Glory: If he tempted such a character to adore him, it is no wonder that he should seek to bring all mankind to pay him homage.

St. Matthew gives us the history of this part of our Lord's temptation in these words, "Again the
 "Devil taketh him up into an exceeding high
 "mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of
 "the world, and the glory of them; and saith
 "unto him, All these things will I give thee, if

“thou wilt fall down and worship me.” St. Matt. iv. 8, 9. See also St. Luke, iv. 5, 6, 7. After this most daring attempt, (the highest proof that can be given of Satan’s ambition to be adored by all intelligences) I need not mention any other, as it is impossible that any should exceed, or even equal this.

The *ambition* of Nebuchadnezzar was unbounded; he aspired to be great above all others, yea, to be equal to God himself, and to have universal dominion over mankind. But above all others his highest triumph was to destroy the city and temple where God had placed his name. The grandeur of the city where he dwelt, its astonishing walls, towers, gates, gardens, palaces, and other buildings, shewed his lofty ambition, as well as his great riches, and numerous conquests. In this passion he was a figure of the Devil, that ambitious restless enemy of God and man. Satan has like ambition, or he would not have aspired to render himself independent of the Creator, and to be adored by all mankind. Universal power, glory and dominion, was what Nebuchadnezzar sought to acquire and hold; and Satan hath aspired to the same, and hath but too well succeeded in his aim. If he could have triumphed over the Son of God, and added him to the number of his vassals, it would have been the height of his ambition; but though he failed in all attempts against his virtue, he had the satisfaction of seeing him,

him, through the power of diabolical influence, betrayed, forsaken, and crucified ; and in all ages hitherto, he hath triumphed over men, and hath entered into the Church of God, and seemingly hath almost done as he pleased : So that hitherto he hath been suffered to do great things, according to his will ; and hath stood up against the Prince of Princes, and hath practised and prospered.

Nebuchadnezzar was a most arbitrary and horrid tyrant ; his yoke was a yoke of iron, he minded no law but his own will, and he made the conquered nations bow to his tyrannical sway.

Instances of his tyranny are frequently mentioned in the Scripture, and his whole reign, till he was humbled, was one continued scene of tyrannical conduct. *All peoples, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him ; whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive, and whom he would he set up, and whom he would he put down.* Dan. v. 19.

This is a complete picture of an arbitrary tyrant ; such was this famous King of Babylon, under whose heavy yoke and bitter servitude the nations groaned ; and such is the Prince of the power of the air, his service is the most dreadful slavery that can be conceived. He is a hard master indeed ; his service is cruel bondage, and his wages are death and damnation. God seems to have given up the human race for a long season to the tyranny of Satan, as he did the nations of the earth, and even his own people,

people, to the sway of Nebuchadnezzar; and, in some measure, for the same causes; because they delighted not in the easy and pleasant service of the true God, therefore he gave them up to the will of a cruel tyrant, that they might know the difference by experience. As God said by Moses, "Because
 " thou servedst not JEHOVAH thy God with joyfulness
 " and with gladness of heart, for the abundance
 " of all things: therefore shalt thou serve thine
 " enemies which JEHOVAH shall send against thee
 " in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in
 " want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of
 " iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed
 " thee." Deut. xxviii. 47, 48.

When Shishak, King of Egypt came against *Jerusalem* and took it, God did not suffer him to do all that his malice might have excited him to do, but he said, "Nevertheless they shall be his servants; that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries." 2 Chron. xii. 8. It would be happy for men if they would serve God, without being made to know by sad experience, the difference between his easy service, and the hard service of cruel tyrants, into whose hands they are given, because they refuse to obey him.

Nebuchadnezzar was one of the most arbitrary tyrants that ever vexed the people of God, or ruled over mankind. And in this he was certainly a striking picture of that great tyrant that for so many
 ages

ages hath ruled over all the human race, with but few exceptions. O Lord put an end to his tyranny, and set mankind free from his iron yoke!

The next likeness that I shall consider, wherein Nebuchadnezzar was a strong figure of Satan, was his amazing *pride*. This horrid vice was that for which he was brought down, and reduced to a most miserable condition. And pride is justly esteemed the Devil's first sin, by which he fell from his glorious state. And therefore St. Paul forbids a Bishop to be a *novice*, or one newly come to the faith, "Lest
" being lifted up with pride he fall into the con-
" demnation of the devil." 1 Tim. iii. 6.

The prophet Isaiah speaks in most exalted language of Babylon's destruction, and he seems to have this proud king in his eye, under whom the city rose to its marvellous greatness. And he speaks of his pride and fall, as though he had intended to compare Nebuchadnezzar and Lucifer together.—
" How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer,
" son of the morning! how art thou cut down to
" the ground, which didst weaken the nations!
" For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend
" into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the
" stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of
" the congregation, in the sides of the north: I
" will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I
" will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt
" be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."
Isa. xiv. 12, 13, 14, 15.

The

The account which Nebuchadnezzar himself, after he was punished, gives of his pride and haughtiness, is very striking, and shews that it was for his pride and arrogance that he was reduced to the condition of a brute. “ At the end of twelve months
“ he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spake and said, Is not this great
“ Babylon that I have built for the house of the
“ kingdom, by the might of my power, and for
“ the honour of my majesty? While the word was
“ in the king’s mouth, there fell a voice from Heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it
“ is spoken : The kingdom is departed from thee,
“ And they shall drive thee from men, and thy
“ dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field :
“ they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and
“ seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know
“ that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of
“ men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.” Dan.
iv. 29, 30, 31, 32.

Daniel himself gives an account of this event to Belshazzar, which corresponds exactly with the above awful prediction. “ O thou king, the most
“ high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a
“ kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour.
“ And for the majesty that he gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him : whom he would he slew ; and
“ whom he would he kept alive ; and whom
“ he would set up ; and whom he put down.
“ But

“ But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind
“ hardened in pride, he was deposed from his
“ kingly throne, and they took his glory from him :
“ And he was driven from the sons of men ; and
“ his heart was made like the beasts, and his
“ dwelling was with the wild asses : they fed him
“ with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with
“ the dew of heaven ; till he knew that the most
“ high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that
“ he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.” Chap.
v. 18, 19, 20, 21.

Pride appears to be one of the great sins of Nebuchadnezzar, and that which above all others brought him low ; and this is the great sin of the devil, for which he was cast down from bliss, and is reserved under chains of darkness : and must be brought down still lower, even to be shut up in the bottomless pit for a thousand years : nor is this all, for after that he shall be loosed out of the abyss, he shall be condemned to the lake of fire, not for seven years only, nor probably for so little a time as seven thousand years, but for those dreadful periods called, *Ages of Ages*, which may last perhaps seven times seven thousand years, or God knows how long ; but certainly till he shall be entirely subdued, and thoroughly humbled.

How long a time this great work shall require is only known to God, and as he has no where plainly revealed it, I shall not pretend with certainty to say any thing upon this head. It is sufficient for us to know

that

that he that made him can make his sword to approach unto him, and knows as perfectly well, what methods to take in order to subdue this arch enemy of God and man, and to humble him to the lowest degree, as he knew how to bring down the proud and haughty king of Babylon, who was so great and wonderful a figure of him.

Since pride is the Devil's sin, let men avoid it if they would wish to escape his dreadful condemnation. *Pride was not made for man*; says the wise son of Sirach. I have often made the observation, that those beings that are nearest to God, and most conformed to him, are the humblest of all intelligences; and on the contrary, those that are farthest from him, and most unlike him, are the proudest. This we may learn from the conduct of Michael the Archangel, who certainly is one of the nearest to God; he, when he contended with the Devil, was so full of humility, that he durst not bring even so much as a railing accusation against him, but only said, "The Lord rebuke thee." But Satan, on the other hand, who is the most unlike to God, and at the greatest distance from him, is called *The accuser of the brethren, who accuses them before God day and night*; which conduct shews his amazing pride and arrogance, as well as the depth of his malice and envy. See Jude 9. Rev. xii. 10. Whereas holy angels are "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."—Heb. i. 14. And the highest order of angels, even those

those who in Heaven always behold the face of God, seem particularly appointed as the guardians and protectors of little children. See St. Matt. xviii. 10.

In proportion as we are humble, we approach to the condition of holy angels ; and, on the contrary, as far as pride has place within us we become like fallen angels, or devils. Pride discovers itself in us by filling us with envy and wrath, and prompting us to accuse and censure others, even those who are our superiors. Humility preserves us from railing against even the worst of characters, and makes us to delight in serving those that are ever so much our inferiors. I generally reckon selfishness, envy, pride and wrath, as the four elements of Hell, and the causes of all misery ; and universal benevolence, resignation to God's will, humility and meekness as their contraries, the very elements of Heaven, and the sources of all happiness, both here and hereafter.

Excuse this short digression, which may be of use to some ; happy shall I be if it may prevent *pride* in any, and strengthen the opposite grace, *humility*.

To return now to Nebuchadnezzar. Another part of his character, in which he was exceedingly like to the Devil, was his excessive *cruelty*, and horrid barbarity. Cruelty seems to have been his very nature, and many instances wherein he shewed this devilish disposition are recorded in Scripture ; some of which I will mention. Both the sacred Prophets and historians describe him, as fierce and very cruel. Isaiah speaks
of

of him as, “ *the oppressor*, he who smote the people in
 “ wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the na-
 “ tions in anger; the man that made the earth to
 “ tremble; that did shake kingdoms; that made the
 “ world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities there-
 “ of; that opened not the house of his prisoners.” Isai.
 xiv. 4, 6, 16, 17.

And God by the prophet Jeremiah speaks of the cru-
 elty of this King of Babylon which he exercised towards
 the children of Judah, saying, “ Israel is a scattered sheep;
 “ the lions have driven him away: first, the King of
 “ Assyria hath devoured him; and last, this Nebu-
 “ chadnezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones.”
 Jer. l. 17.

“ Thus saith JEHOVAH of Hosts, the children of
 “ Israel and Judah were oppressed together; and all
 “ that took them captives held them fast; they refused
 “ to let them go.” Ver. 33.

The Prophet Habakkuk speaks of the bitter cruel-
 ty of the Chaldeans under the command and direc-
 tion of this cruel monster of men, and it seemed to
 him one of the greatest mysteries of Providence, why
 God should suffer the most wicked and cruel people,
 to destroy and triumph over his own inheritance.

“ Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and
 “ wonder marvellously: for I will work a work in your
 “ days, which ye will not believe though it be told
 “ you. For lo, I will raise up the Chaldeans, that
 “ bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through
 “ the

" the breadth of the land to possess the dwelling places
 " that are not theirs. They are terrible and dreadful ;
 " their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of
 " themselves. Their horses also are swifter than the
 " leopards; and are more fierce than the evening
 " wolves; and their horsemen shall spread them-
 " selves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they
 " shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat. They
 " shall come all for violence : their faces shall sup up
 " as the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity
 " as the sand. And they shall scoff at the kings, and
 " the princes shall be a scorn unto them; they shall
 " divide every strong hold; for they shall heap dust
 " and take it. Then shall his mind change, and he
 " shall pass over, and offend, imputing this his power
 " unto his God."—Hab. i. 5,—11.

After this prophecy, which shews the successful
 cruelty of the Chaldeans, the Prophet addresses God,
 and seems to reason with the Governor of the uni-
 verse in the following pathetic manner. " Art thou
 " not from everlasting, O JEHOVAH, my God, mine
 " Holy One? we shall not die, O JEHOVAH, thou
 " hast ordained them for judgment; and O mighty
 " God, thou hast established them for correction.
 " Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and
 " canst not look on iniquity ; wherefore lookest thou
 " upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy
 " tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is

“more righteous than he? And makest men as the
 “fishes of the sea? as the creeping things that have
 “no ruler over them? They take up all of them
 “with the angle, they catch them in their net, and
 “gather them in their drag; therefore they rejoice
 “and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice unto their
 “net, and burn incense unto their drag; because
 “by them their portion is fat, and their meat plente-
 “ous. Shall they therefore empty their net, and not
 “spare continually to slay the nations?” Ver. 12—

17. There are many passages in the Prophets, especially Jeremiah and Ezekiel, that speak of the cruelty of Nebuchadnezzar, but I must pass them over for brevity's sake, and give you a few passages from the sacred history in proof of the same.

2 Chron. xxxvi. 16, 17. “The wrath of JEHO-
 “VAH, arose against his people, till there was no re-
 “medy. Therefore he brought upon them the king
 “of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the
 “sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no
 “compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or
 “him that stooped for age; he gave them all into his
 “hand.”

This is a general description of his cruelty, he spared none, but barbarously slew all sorts, from helpless infancy to feeble old age. He appears in the history, as one wholly devoid of pity or compassion. And is therein a strong figure of the Devil, whose very nature

is

is cruelty in the extreme. *He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth;* St. John viii. 44. All cruelty, rage, malice, and hatred proceed from Satan, and just as far as these evil tempers dwell in the hearts of the children of men, they become children of the Devil, being made partakers of his nature. And it was on the account of the cruel and murderous disposition of the Jews, and their hatred of our Lord, that he said unto them, "Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." The wicked, cruel, wrathful, envious and proud are evidently children of Satan.

Soloman says, "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast; but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel." Prov. xii. 10.

There are several particular acts of cruelty mentioned in the Scriptures, that were committed by Nebuchadnezzar, which serve to shew that his delight was to torment mankind. One instance of this was his treatment of king Zedekiah, upon whom he contrived to let his fury fall in the most dreadful manner, by first slaying all his children before his eyes, and then while they were agonizing before him, and writhing in the pains of death, he ordered the eyes of the unhappy father to be immediately put out, that so he might forever have the sad image in his view, the last sight which he beheld. It was far more cruel, first to slay his darlings in his sight, and then to put out his eyes, than though the cruelties had been reversed; and

his children had been slain after his power of seeing was destroyed. Had the father been slain with his children, the rage and cruelty of Nebuchadnezzar would not have been contented; he meant to punish Zedekiah in a manner far more severe. And therefore after he had beheld his subjects and children slain before his eyes the tyrant destroyed his sight for ever, then bound him in chains, carried him into a strange land, far distant from his native air, shut him up in prison, and kept him confined until the day of his death. Thereby making his miseries as severe and lasting as possible, and shewing the excess of his cruelty. See 2 Kings, xxv. 7. Jer. xxxix. 6, 7. chap. lii. 10, 11.

Jeremiah laments the miseries that Nebuchadnezzar brought upon Jerusalem and its inhabitants, its king, princes, priests, and nobles, in the most pathetic and affecting manner, in the book of the Lamentations. "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold and see, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith JEHOVAH hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger." Lam. i. 12.

This is a little specimen of his manner; but you must read the book itself with attention in order to discover the beauties therein contained, and then you will find that Jeremiah was the most complete writer of this kind that perhaps ever took pen in hand.

The unreasonable cruelty of Nebuchadnezzar in giving commandment to slay and destroy all the wise men

men in Babylon, because they were not able to tell him a dream (which he had forgotten) and the interpretation thereof; is another specimen of that wicked disposition which dwelt in him almost without measure.

“ For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. And the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain, and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain,” Dan. ii. 12, 13.

But his rage and hellish fury appear in the most horrid light in that abominable decree that he made, that whosoever would not fall down and worship the golden image which he had set up, should the same hour be cast alive into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and in his manner of behaviour towards the three faithful ones who refused to worship his image, or deviate in the least from the law of their God.

When some officious informers accused those three men, Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego, whom Nebuchadnezzar had set over the affairs of the Province of Babylon, saying,——“ These men, O king, have not regarded thee; they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego; then they brought these men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, “ Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego? “ do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden

“image which I have set up? Now if ye be ready
“that at what time ye hear the sound of the corner,
“flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and
“all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the
“image which I have made, well; but if ye worship
“not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of
“a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that
“shall deliver you out of my hands?

“Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego answered
“and said to the king. O Nebuchadnezzar, we
“are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If
“it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deli-
“ver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will
“deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not,
“be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not
“serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image
“which thou hast set up.”

“Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and
“the form of his visage was changed against Sha-
“drach, Meshech, and Abednego; therefore he
“spake, and commanded that they should heat the
“furnace one seven times more than it was wont to
“be heated. And he commanded the most mighty
“men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Me-
“shech, and Abednego, and to cast them into
“the burning fiery furnace. Then these men
“were bound in their coats, their hose, and their
“other garments, and were cast into the midst of
“the burning fiery furnace. Therefore, because the
“king’s

“king’s commandment was urgent, and the furnace
 “exceeding hot, the flame of the fire flew those
 “men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-
 “nego. And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach,
 “and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of
 “the burning fiery furnace.” Dan. iii. 12—23.

Here is a lively picture of a furious tyrant, filled with rage and madness, burning with the fire of Hell, as like the Devil as possible; and I think it must be universally acknowledged, that in the whole of this business he appeared as a figure of Satan, who in all ages from the beginning, has exercised horrid cruelties upon mankind, and especially upon those who have dedicated themselves to the service of the true God. Oh, the horrid persecutions which the Devil in all ages by his influence hath raised against the true worshippers of God! halters, racks, stakes, saws, axes, and a thousand tortures have been employed by him and his agents, to destroy true godliness out of the world. But still it subsists, notwithstanding all the rage of earth and hell. God in all ages has been the refuge of those who confided in him, and though they have generally been suffered in the sight of men to die and perish, yet they are in peace, and enjoy felicity in the presence of their Lord. We cannot help lamenting that Satan has so much power over mankind, as to make the greater part of the human race mere devils incarnate through rage and malice. But blessed be God, Sa-
 N. 4. Satan’s

tan's time is now but short; he hath reigned and triumphed long, but soon his kingdom on earth shall be destroyed, and he shall be brought down, down into the deep; and though from thence he shall be loosed for a little season, to make his last attempt against the cause of God, (as you have heard) yet he shall be taken and cast into the lake of fire, which shall burn far more dreadfully than Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, and there he shall feel all the torment that he hath caused others to feel, seven times over, God will repay him, and who shall prevent him? He will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion. There shall he suffer to the ages of ages, until he be subdued.

The last instance that I shall notice wherein Nebuchadnezzar stands as a figure of Satan, is in the *universality of his empire* over the nations of the earth. In the prophecy of Jeremiah we find the universality of Nebuchadnezzar's empire spoken of in very strong language. He was commanded to make yokes and put them upon his neck, and then to send them to the kings of Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, Tyrus and Sidon, with the following message. "Thus saith JEHOVAH of Hosts, the God
 " of Israel, thus shall ye say unto your masters; I
 " have made the earth, the man and the beast that
 " are upon the ground, by my great power and by
 " my stretched out arm, and have given it unto
 " whom it seemed meet unto me.—And now
 " have I given all these lands into the hand of
 " Nebuchadnezzar

“Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my
“servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him
“also to serve him. And all nations shall serve
“him, and his son, and his son’s son, until the very
“time of his land come; and then many nations, and
“great kings shall serve themselves of him.” Jer.
xxvii. 4, 5, 6, 7.

And in chap. xxv. 11, it is said, “And this
“whole land shall be a desolation and an astonish-
“ment; and these nations shall serve the king of
“Babylon seventy years.”

And in that same chapter Jeremiah is ordered to
take the wine cup of fury at the Lord’s hand, and to
send it to many nations, and after beginning with
Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings
thereof, and the princes thereof, and particularly
enumerating more than twenty other people and na-
tions, it is added, “And all the kings of the north,
“far and near, one with another, and all the king-
“doms of the world which are upon the face of the
“earth.” See from ver. 15—27.

This prophecy holds forth that the king of Baby-
lon, the great minister of God’s wrath, should pro-
per and prevail, and cause those nations for a time to
submit to him; but that after a certain time many
nations, and great kings should serve themselves of
him, and should cast off the yoke, and rise up against
him, and that he and his people should be recom-
pensed according to their deeds, and the works of
their own hands.

How

How very similar these prophecies of the universality of Nebuchadnezzar's empire for a time, and afterwards of its total overthrow, are to the visions of St. John respecting the kingdom of the beast, which certainly is one considerable branch of Satan's empire, and may stand as a specimen of the whole.

“ And all the world wondered after the beast.—
 “ And they worshipped the dragon who gave power
 “ unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast,
 “ saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able
 “ to make war with him?——And it was given
 “ unto him to make war with the saints, and to
 “ overcome them; and power was given him over
 “ all kindreds and tongues and nations. And all
 “ that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose
 “ names are not written in the book of life of the
 “ Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”—
 Rev. xiii. 3, 4, 7, 8.

And his dominion is farther represented so universal, and his power so great, as to compel “ all,
 “ both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,
 “ to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their
 “ foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell,
 “ save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast,
 “ or the number of his name.” Ver. 16, 17.

And the angel farther informs St. John saying,
 “ The beast that thou sawest, was, and is not; and
 “ shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go in-
 “ to perdition; and they that dwell on the earth
 “ shall

“ shall wonder, whose names were not written in the
“ book of life from the foundation of the world,
“ when they behold the beast that was, and is not,
“ and yet is.”

“ And the ten horns which thou sawest, are ten
“ kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but
“ receive power as kings one hour with the beast.
“ These have one mind, and shall give their power
“ and strength unto the beast.”

“ And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the
“ beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make
“ her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh,
“ and burn her with fire. For God hath put in
“ their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and
“ give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words
“ of God shall be fulfilled.” Rev. xvii. 8, 12, 13,
16, 17.

These words relate to mystical Babylon and its head, as the words of Jeremiah did to literal Babylon and king Nebuchadnezzar; and therefore it is no wonder there should be such a similarity. But let men think as they may respecting the dragon, the beasts, Babylon, the great whore, and the ten horns, mentioned by St. John, yet it must be allowed that the god of this age, even Satan, hath reigned over mankind in general ever since sin entered the world, and still continues to rule *in the hearts of the children of disobedience*. His empire hath been far more unbounded than that of Nebuchadnezzar, and hath already lasted more than eighty times as long. And
hath

hath been ten thousand times more destructive to the human race. How many volumes might be filled with the dismal accounts of the evils and miseries that have been experienced since Satan's empire over mankind commenced!

Nebuchadnezzar had his princes, and leaders of his army, who were subject to his command, and who went forth to destroy cities, and lay countries waste; and they were not only permitted by God to overcome and spoil the nations of the earth in general, but also to enter into the gates of Jerusalem, and to burn the holy Temple, the most beautiful building ever seen by mortals, the house where God had chosen to place his name, and to lead the nation of his choice into captivity.

Jeremiah gives us the barbarous names of those cruel princes and leaders of the king of Babylon's army, who entered into Jerusalem. "And all the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the middle gate, even Nergal-sharezar, Samgar-nebo, Sarfechim, Rabfari, Nergal-sharezer, Rabmag, with all the residue of the princes of the king of Babylon." Jer. xxxix. 3.

O what a sad sight it was to behold these barbarous conquerors enter into Jerusalem, and sit in the middle gate! Jeremiah in his Lamentations says, "The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem." Lam. iv. 12.

But



But so it was, and it was a subject worthy to be lamented by the plaintive tongue of Jeremiah. God had before said by the mouth of the same Prophet, "I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage; I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hands of her enemies." Jer. xii. 7. And unless that had been the case, the enemies of Zion could not have prevailed against her.

Satan hath also his princes, commanders of his hellish legions, principalities, and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this age; See Ephes. vi. 12; Col. ii. 15. These he sends forth to destroy the souls and bodies of mankind; and alas! above all things to be lamented, these evil powers and princes have entered into the church of God, and have prevailed, and have overcome the saints, and have almost totally ruined the fair and glorious building erected by the Apostles, under the immediate direction of the Holy Spirit. That church that was *of one heart, and one soul, one mind, and one accord, who continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers, who continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, who did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart; praising God, and having favour with all the people, that church to whom the Lord daily added such as should be saved;* hath been long since by the power and influence of Satan scattered and destroyed, and nothing like it is now seen in the world.

The

The church of Jesus Christ, so far from being in that flourishing state that it was in the days of the Apostles, is now, and has been for ages, either in captivity under the power of the adversary, or like a very poor and feeble folk returning from bondage. It is evident that all those strifes, divisions, animosities, jars, tumults, and contentions, that have so long infested the Christian church, are the work of Satan; as also that worldly mindedness, sloth, carelessness, luke-warmness, and indifference, which have so long prevailed; but his greatest triumph has been in filling the Christian church with bitterness, enmity, hatred, malice, wrath, &c. and by these dispositions turning it into the very kingdom of Hell, and sitting himself as chief ruler, where Jesus ought to reign as Lord and King; and his highest joy has been in beholding Christians by profession, making war upon each other, spilling each other's blood as water upon the ground, and persecuting each other even to death. Oh how Satan rejoices to see Christians turn murderers, and tormenters of each other! And alas! he hath had a long triumph of this kind. Why God should have given up the beloved of his soul, the Christian church, into the hands of Satan, and the powers of darkness, as he did Jerusalem and the Temple into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar and his princes, who can tell? But the fact appears as evident as the sun at noon day, to all careful observers;

ers; and is for a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation.

But doubtless God has wise ends in all that he does, and in all that he suffers to be done; and time will reveal his gracious designs. It may be however certainly concluded, that if Jerusalem had not rebelled, the city, people, and temple would never have been given into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar: so if the Christian Church had preserved its purity, first love and zeal, and had not grieved the Spirit of God, and caused the blessed Saviour to withdraw his presence, Satan could never have gained the advantages over it that he hath done. The Lamentations of Jeremiah, with but very little variation, may be applied to the present very deplorable situation in which the Church of Jesus hath remained so long, and still continues. Nevertheless, as the reign of Nebuchadnezzar and his empire came to an end, after an appointed time, so shall the kingdom of Satan be destroyed, and the church shall be delivered from his tyranny, and all mankind shall be freed from his yoke: and the appointed time is, I believe, near at hand.

What hath been said is fully sufficient to shew that Nebuchadnezzar was a lively figure of Satan in his *universal dominion*, as well as in the other instances I have mentioned. But if any thing was wanting to confirm the idea of Nebuchadnezzar's having an extensive empire, we find enough in the book of Daniel

Daniel to establish the fact, even if there were no other passages in the Scripture to support it.

Daniel, in explaining the dream of Nebuchadnezzar respecting the four monarchies, says, "Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of Heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and he hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold." Dan. ii. 37, 38.

The same thing is held forth in Nebuchadnezzar's second dream, wherein he saw himself represented as "A tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth. The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it." Chap. iv. 10, 11, 12.

When Daniel came to interpret this part of the vision, he said, "The tree that thou sawest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth, whose leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation. It is thou,

“th , O king, that art grown and become strong;
“for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto hea-
“ven, and thy dominion unto the end of the earth.”
Ver. 20, 21, 22.

And the same Daniel said to Belshazzar, “O thou
“king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy
“father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory and ho-
“nour. And for the majesty that he gave him, all
“people, nations, and languages trembled and feared
“before him; whom he would he slew; and whom
“he would be kept alive, and whom he would he set
“up, and whom he would he put down.” Chap. v.
18, 19.

It is a dark and trying dispensation to mankind, and especially to the wise and good, when proud and cruel tyrants have the dominion over them, and why this should come to pass under the eye, and by the permission of an infinitely wise, powerful and good God, is a question that hath puzzled the greatest reasoners, and sorely exercised the faith and patience of the best of men. But it is far more obscure and dark that the great Governor of the universe should suffer his greatest enemy for so many ages to tyrannize and triumph over mankind; yet so it has been, and will be, till Christ shall descend, and reverse the trying scene, and take to himself his great power, and rule and reign from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.

If the system held forth in these Lectures, does not give a satisfactory answer to that difficult question, *Why hath the wise, holy, just, good and powerful Supreme suffered evil to prevail in the world so long?* I know not of any rational answer that can be given thereto; for if evil both moral and penal must, according to the common opinion, endure to all eternity, or while God himself exists, it will be impossible to reconcile it with the ideas which we have of the great first cause, whom we know to be absolutely and essentially good. But if evil is to endure only for a time, and is designed to display the divine character in the most glorious manner, and is suffered in the creation as a kind of travail towards a more glorious and permanent state of happiness and perfection, and is also intended for ever to prevent rebellion from rising again in the universe; (as I have endeavoured to shew) then this darkest of all mysteries becomes plain and clear.

I have briefly gone over what was proposed in the present Lecture, and have mentioned Nebuchadnezzar's rebellion against God, his *ambition, tyranny, pride, cruelty, and universal dominion*, and have considered him in all these respects, *as a most striking figure of Lucifer, or the Chief Prince of the Fallen Angels*. His likeness to Satan appears to me as evident as a figure can well be; and there is as great a conformity in this instance as between almost any type of Christ and the blessed Saviour himself; and as a figurative likeness is
universally

universally allowed in the latter case, I see no reason why it should not be granted in the former.

The *humiliation*, and *recovery* of Nebuchadnezzar, &c. shall, by divine permission, be treated of in the next Lecture; and I hope none that hear me will be sorry to understand that he is as striking a figure in those respects, as in them that have been already mentioned.

END OF THE THIRTY-SEVENTH LECTURE.

(196)

LECTURE XXXVIII.

THE HISTORY OF

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

CONTINUED.

He was convinced of the Wisdom of GOD, by the Understanding given to Daniel, whereby he was able to tell the King his First Dream, and the Interpretation of it. He was made to acknowledge the Power of GOD, by seeing the miraculous Deliverance wrought for the Three Children in the Fiery Furnace. His Address to the Nations of the Earth. His Second Dream, and Daniel's Interpretation thereof. His amazing State of Degradation.

IN the last Lecture, I traced the history of Nebuchadnezzar far enough to shew, that he was a very striking figure of Satan, in his rebellion against God, ambition, tyranny, pride, and universal dominion. In this discourse, other scenes will be exhibited before our eyes, viz. the ways and means which the Great Sovereign of the Universe took to subdue and reclaim

reclaim him. His recovery was not effected without a considerable process, and was brought about in a way that tended to glorify the name of God, and manifest his character to mankind. Nebuchadnezzar was first brought to know and acknowledge the divine wisdom of God. Secondly, he was made to see and confess his infinite power. And thirdly, that which finished his conversion was his being degraded and humbled, until he knew and confessed that God was the universal Sovereign of the universe; and in consequence submitted to him, and praised, honoured, and adored his name.

That which convinced the King of the infinite wisdom of God, and his superiority over all intelligences, was the revelation which he made to Daniel of the dream which Nebuchadnezzar had, and of the interpretation thereof, which none of all the wise men of Babylon could possibly attain by all their curious arts, and which they declared before the tyrant, could not be shewed by any other “except the gods whose dwelling is not with flesh.”——
Dan. ii. 11.

Daniel the Prophet appeared throughout the whole affair to conduct himself in the most humble and excellent manner possible, to the glory of God, his own abasement, the salvation of the wise men, and the conviction of the king.

When the secret was revealed to him, he blessed the God of heaven, and said, “Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever; for wisdom and might

“are his : And he changeth the times and the
 “seasons ; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings ;
 “he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to
 “them that know understanding. He revealeth the
 “deep and secret things ; he knoweth what is in the
 “darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. I thank
 “thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers,
 “who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast
 “made known unto me now what we desired of
 “thee ; for thou hast made known unto me the king’s
 “matter.” Chap. ii. 20, 21, 22, 23.

How full of piety and devotion, reverence and gra-
 titude, humility and adoration, was this address to
 God ! And when he came before the king, he did not
 forget to ascribe all the glory and honour to his name
 to whom alone it was due, and disclaimed all preten-
 sions to wisdom, goodness, or excellence of character :
 Thus he addressed the king, “ The secret which the
 “king hath demanded, cannot the wise men, the as-
 “trotlogers, the magicians, the sooth-sayers shew un-
 “to the king : But there is a God in heaven that re-
 “vealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king
 “Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.
 “Thy dream and the visions of thy head upon thy
 “bed are these ; As for thee, O king, thy thoughts
 “came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should
 “come to pass hereafter ; and he that revealeth se-
 crets maketh known unto thee what shall come to
 pass. But as for me, this secret is not revealed to
 “me

“ me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart.” Ver. 27, 28, 29, 30.

Twice Daniel assayed to begin the dream, and then stopt to guard the king against ascribing to the creature, what was due to God alone; and he chose rather to ascribe, before Nebuchadnezzar, the extraordinary interposition of God, in revealing the secret, to those smaller reasons, the preventing the destruction of the wise men of Babylon, (who had promised to make the interpretation known when the dream was told) and the satisfying the curiosity of that Monarch, rather than to the principal cause, the fervent intercession of himself and his three faithful companions: thus hiding his extraordinary piety, that he might direct the tyrant to God alone, as the fountain of all wisdom. After this precaution he went on to relate the dream, and to shew the interpretation, and when he had gone through, the king was so astonished, that he “ fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel,” and “ commanded that they should offer an oblation and “ sweet odours unto him. The king answered unto “ Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is that your God is a “ God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer “ of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret.” Verse 46, 47.

This

This wonderful event, convinced him that there was a Supreme Being, who knew the secrets of the hearts, and who was able to inspire man with the knowledge of past, present, and future events. This miraculous discovery, though it answered great and valuable purposes, did not convert the king from his idolatry, blasphemy, cruelty, and pride; but it certainly left a considerable impression upon his mind, which might in some measure pre-dispose him for that remarkable change which afterwards took place upon him.

He was next brought to confess and adore that infinite power of God, which was so marvellously displayed in the deliverance of the three children out of the midst of the burning fiery furnace, wherein they were cast bound, by his order, because they refused to bow down and worship his gods, and the golden image which he had set up.

How he seemed to defy the power of God at first, saying, "And who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?"

But when he saw them walking loose in the fire, in company with the heavenly messenger, the Angel of God's presence, he was greatly "astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? they answered, and said unto the king, "True, O king. He answered and said, Lo! I see four men loose walking in the midst of the fire, " and

“ and they have no hurt; and the form of the
“ fourth is like the Son of God.”

And when, at the invitation of the king, they came out of the fire, not having so much as an hair of their head singed, nor their coats changed, nor the least smell of the fire passed on them, Nebuchadnezzar beholding this most wonderful miracle, was fully convinced of the almighty power of God, and how vain it was to contend with him, and cried out in the language of praise and respect,

“ Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and
“ Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have
“ changed the king’s word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any
“ god except their own God. Therefore I make a
“ decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the
“ God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego,
“ shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be
“ made a dunghill; because there is no other
“ god that can deliver after this sort.” See chap.
iii. 24—29.

This wonder wrought a great effect upon the haughty tyrant; and if nothing more was necessary in order to conversion, than to convince the judgment or understanding, Nebuchadnezzar would have been then converted; but, alas! the total subjection of the will may require a long and painful process to bring

bring it about, after the understanding is fully convinced.

If knowledge alone would cause intelligences to love and serve their Creator, who would be a greater servant of God than Satan himself? For, he *is transformed into an angel of light*, and the very devils *believe and tremble*. See 2 Cor. xi. 14. James ii. 19.

When our blessed Lord was on earth, the devils knew him, and addressed him in a very respectful manner, and yet they did not love him, but they greatly feared his power.

St. Matthew informs us, that when our Lord was come “into the country of the Gergesenes, there
“met him two possessed with devils, coming out of
“the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might
“pass that way. And behold, they (that is, the
“devils) cried out, saying, What have we to do
“with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou
“come hither to torment us before the time?” See chap. viii. 28, 29. And St. Mark says, “And
“there was in their synagogue a man with an un-
“clean spirit; and he (the unclean spirit) cried
“out, saying, Let us alone: what have we to do
“with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou
“come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art;
“the Holy One of God.” If knowledge was enough, the devils would then have been changed again to holy angels; but though they knew him, and were subject to his word, yet they were by no means

means his hearty friends; and, therefore, St. Mark, in the same chapter says, "And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils, and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him." See St. Mark, i. 23, 24, 34.

"Knowledge, alas! 'tis all in vain;

"And all in vain our fear:

"Our stubborn sins will fight and reign

"If love be absent there.

" 'Tis love that makes our chearful feet

"In swift obedience move;

"The devils know, and tremble too;

"But Satan cannot love."

Dr. Watts Hymns.

The same Evangelist elsewhere informs us, that "unclean spirits when they saw him, fell down before him, and saying, Thou art the Son of God. And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known." Chap. iii. 11, 12. The wonderful history in chap. v. shews, not only that the devils knew and feared Christ, but also, that they treated him with far greater respect than many of the human race do.

"But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, and cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou

“thou Son of the Most High God? I adjure thee,
 “by God, that thou torment me not. For he said
 “unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean
 “spirit. And he asked him, What is thy name?
 “and he answered, saying, My name is Legion;
 “for we are many. And he besought him much
 “that he would not send them away out of the
 “country.” Ver. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Here it appears that the devils knew, worshipped, honoured, and besought him, whom men frequently deride, neglect, and blaspheme.

St. Luke gives his testimony to the same thing, in nearly the same words with St. Mark.

“And in the synagogue there was a man which
 “had a spirit of an unclean devil, and he cried
 “out with a loud voice, saying, Let us alone;
 “what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Na-
 “zareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know
 “thee who thou art: the Holy One of God. And
 “Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and
 “come out of him. And when the devil had
 “thrown him in the midst, he came out of him,
 “and hurt him not.” St. Luke, iv. 33, 34, 35.

And in ver. 41, we read, “And devils also came
 “out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art
 “Christ, the Son of God. And he rebuking them,
 “suffered them not to speak; for they knew that
 “he was Christ.”

And

And again, in chap. viii. ver 28. "When he saw
" Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him,
" and with a loud voice said, What have I to do
" with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God Most High?
" I beseech thee torment me not."

The devils, instead of seeking to provoke Jesus to send them to hell, and to destroy them, as many men do, "besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep." Ver. 31. This *deep*, which they were so afraid of, appears to me to be the abyss, or bottomless pit, into which they expected to be cast; and dreaded, lest the Son of God intended at that time to confine them in that gloomy prison.

It seems that the devils have some knowledge of the punishment that shall come upon them, and some idea of the time when it shall be executed upon them, and therefore they said, "Art thou come
" hither to torment us before the time?" And how earnestly they besought him not to torment them! O, ye profane sons of Adam, consider how far ye dare to go in sin and wickedness beyond the devils themselves! They fell down before the face of the Son of God, acknowledged him as the Holy One of God, worshipped him, besought him fervently that he would not torment them. But ye not only refuse to acknowledge Jesus, to call upon his name in a serious manner; but ye blasphemously call upon God for wrath, vengeance, and damnation to fall
upon

upon your devoted heads. Consider and amend your ways, lest ye suddenly fall into the condemnation of the devil, and share with him in his punishment, as in this instance at least, ye exceed him in sin.

As Nebuchadnezzar saw, by the wonderful miracle that was wrought in favour of the three children, that their deliverer was in truth the Son of God, whom he then acknowledged, confessed, and adored : so the devils saw, by the wonders that Jesus performed, that he was indeed the Son of God, that was appointed to come into the world for the destruction of evil, and salvation of mankind ; and they openly acknowledged and confessed him as such, and greatly feared before him.

Thus far Nebuchadnezzar appears as a clear figure of Satan ; but as the mighty works of God, which the king of Babylon beheld, did by no means subdue his pride and haughtiness, but a severe process first passed upon him, and he was made to feel the powerful hand of God upon himself, before he would submit to the Sovereign of Heaven and earth : so the light and knowledge which Satan hath, and all the wonders which he hath seen, and all the faith and fear that he possesses, and all the respect which he hath shewn to the Lord, all these put together have not as yet brought him to humble himself before his Great Creator, against whom he hath so long and grievously rebelled. And if ever his restoration is to be brought

brought about, it must be by a very long and severe process, which must pass upon him and his companions, in the lake of fire and brimstone, that dreadful Tophet which was prepared for him of old.

Whatever intimation the Scriptures may give upon this head, I shall endeavour faithfully to set before you. I cannot but consider the amazing degradation, humiliation, and re-exaltation of Nebuchadnezzar, that most haughty tyrant, as highly figurative of the Prince of Darkness, in all these respects. And I think the account was given in such a particular manner, on purpose to lead our minds beyond the king of Babylon, to meditate on that amazing power of Jesus which will be exerted to lay his proud adversary in the dust, and crush his haughty rival beneath his feet, until he is so sufficiently humbled as to sue for mercy, and cry out, 'O. thou 'Seed of the woman, if thou hast any bowels of 'compassion left, have pity upon the seed which 'which thou hast bruised.' And I scruple not to say, that if such a period takes place in the time of our Saviour's mediatorial kingdom, it will be by far the brightest of any that will precede, as such a dispensation will shew the power and grace of the Redeemer in the highest possible point of light.

What I have farther to deliver upon the history of Nebuchadnezzar shall be contained in some remark upon the account which he gives us of his humiliatio

and re-exaltation, as recorded in the fourth chapter of Daniel.

Ver. 1. "Nebuchadnezzar the king unto all
"people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all
"the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you."

What a most astonishing proclamation is here! a miracle of miracles indeed! Peace and good will proclaimed to all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth, by king Nebuchadnezzar! What! is this that haughty cruel tyrant, that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms? that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof, that opened not the house of his prisoners? that deluged the land in blood, led kings away captive, and had no pity upon young nor old, child nor suckling? who slew the young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or he that stooped for age? Is this he that crushed and devoured all nations, that made them as empty and broken vessels, that swallowed them up as a dragon, that filled his belly with their delicates, and cast them out of their land? Is this he that brought all the nations under subjection to his iron yoke, that slew the sons of kings before their eyes, and then put out their eyes that they should see no more, and confined them in prisons, and bound them in chains to the day of their death? Is this he before whom all people, nations,

tions, and languages, trembled and feared?—Is this that arbitrary and powerful tyrant that slew whom he would, and kept alive whom he pleased, that set up one, and put down another, according to his own pleasure without restraint? Is it possible that this is he? Yes, he it is; but Oh how changed! The lion is become a lamb! he that made war upon all people, nations, and languages that dwelt in all the earth, now proclaims peace to all. How wonderful! he whose mouth was filled with war and rage, blasphemy and pride, now has it filled with peace, love and universal benevolence. What can have brought about so great a change in this king? Let us never doubt the power of God, after such an eminent display of it as appears in this astonishing instance. Those that are enemies to mankind at one time, may be friends at another; those who under the power of the devil destroy their fellow-creatures, may, when delivered therefrom by the power of God, be promoters of their peace and welfare, may pray for their prosperity, and seek their good.

Ver. 2. “I thought it good to shew the signs
“and wonders that the high God hath wrought
“toward me.” Now Nebuchadnezzar could acknowledge the God that once he defied, could think well of proclaiming the signs and wonders of JEHOVAH’s hand, which he had experienced; he did not shun to publish to all the nations of the world the very minutest circumstances of his pride and deep

disgrace; thereby taking shame to himself, and giving all the glory to God alone, who had wrought such amazing miracles in and upon him. This conduct of his in making God's signs and wonders towards him universally known, for the benefit of mankind, shews him to be truly converted and reformed, and that his pride was destroyed, and that humility reigned within him. For such an haughty monarch, who had been adored as a god, to come down to lay open his sins, and God's judgments towards him on the account of his transgressions, is such an instance as has very seldom occurred in the history of the world, and proves the sincerity of the royal convert beyond all dispute.

Ver. 3. "How great are his signs! and how
"mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is an ever-
"lasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation."

Were I to speak upon the great signs and mighty wonders of heaven's Eternal King, made known in the works of creation, providence, and redemption, my speech would faint, and my numbers fail. For, "who can utter the mighty acts of JEHOVAH? or
"who can shew forth all his praise?" Psal. cvi. 2. But if we only confine ourselves to the signs and wonders wrought upon a soul in translating it out of the kingdom of darkness, and bringing it into the kingdom of light and love, we shall find them to be great, mighty, and many. And especially in subduing and restoring such a haughty soul as Nebuchadnezzar's,

nezzar's, so long confirmed in sin and iniquity, and so lifted up, and hardened in pride.

How wonderful it was to see such a proud monster become an humble man, such a cruel tyrant the friend of mankind, and he that once could say, "And who is that God, that shall deliver you out of my hands?" turned to be a hearty worshipper of him whom he despised, and celebrating his wonders in the loftiest strains of gratitude and praise? Truly the king of Babylon might say with great propriety, "His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation." The kingdoms of the earth rise, grow, flourish, and then decay, and come to nothing; but JEHOVAH's kingdom shall never come to a period, shall never pass away, nor be destroyed. He is the source of existence, power, wisdom, justice and goodness; his throne is established in righteousness, and can never be moved, nor overthrown. This great doctrine of the durability of God's kingdom, runs through the sacred volume, beginning in the writings of Moses, and ending with those of St. John. "JEHOVAH shall reign for ever and ever." Exod. xv. 18.

"But JEHOVAH shall endure for ever; he hath prepared his throne for judgment. Psal. ix. 7. "JEHOVAH sitteth upon the flood. Yea, JEHOVAH sitteth king for ever." Psal. xxix. 10. "JEHOVAH, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hast formed the earth and the world:

“ even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God.

“ For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.” Psal. xc. 1, 2, 4.

“ Thy years are throughout all generations. Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.” Psal. cii. 24, 25, 26, 27.

“ Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.” Psal. cxlv. 13.

“ Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the mighty God, *JEHOVAH*, the creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding.” Isai. xl. 28.

“ Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished. Harken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat
“ them

“them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat
 “them like wool: but my righteousness shall be
 “for ever, and my salvation from generation to ge-
 “neration.” Isai. li. 6, 7, 8.

There is nothing more evident than the eternity of God, and that he is the rightful Sovereign of heaven and earth, and that his being, perfections, and government, must always continue the same, let what changes will take place among men. Nebuchadnezzar expresses the same great truths as the other sacred writers, and we know that he was instructed therein by the same Spirit that directed them. He had learnt those great and important lessons, the greatness, and glorious perfections of God, and the littleness and meanness of every thing compared with him. But how came he to have those heavenly and sublime thoughts, so contrary to his former way of thinking?—He goes on to inform his subjects, and all people of the earth, how this great change was produced upon him by the powerful hand of God.

Ver. 4, 5. “I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in
 “mine house, and flourishing in my palace: I saw
 “a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts
 “upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled
 “me.”

The king was at rest and ease, in a state of great prosperity, when his repose and quiet was soon disturbed by a fearful dream and vision of the night.

He was greatly troubled, and not without reason, as by the sequel will appear.

Dreams were one of the most common methods by which God communicated his designs to men of old, and it appears from Scripture to be done with a most wise and gracious design.

“ For God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man
“ perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the
“ night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in
“ slumberings upon the bed : Then he openeth the
“ ears of men; and sealeth their instruction, that he
“ may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide
“ pride from man. He keepeth back his soul from
“ the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.”
Job xxxiii. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

We have a considerable account of remarkable, ominous, or prophetical dreams in the Scripture, and all were fulfilled according to their interpretation, as exactly as any prophecies whatever : such were the dreams of Joseph, those of the Chief Butler and Baker, the dreams of Pharoah, king of Egypt, the dream of the man in the host of the Midianites; and such were the two dreams of Nebuchadnezzar, and the very remarkable dream of Daniel the prophet. See chap. vii. All these were prophetical dreams, of more or less consequence, according to the several circumstances of the dreamers, and the events predicted.

At other times dreams were given for instruction; as to Joseph, the husband of the Virgin Mary. See

St.

St. Matt. i. 20—24. ii. 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22.
And to the wise men, ver. 12.

And I can see no reason, why God should not warn mankind by dreams in our time, as well as formerly. Something of this kind is intimated by the Prophet Joel, as belonging to the latter days. “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions, &c.” Joel ii. 28. &c.

But to return to Nebuchadnezzar; he was much troubled at the dream which he had, and the night vision which he saw, and which he judged was intended as a warning to him, though he was not able fully to comprehend the meaning thereof. He did not however despise it, as many are apt to do, when they are warned by the kind providence of God of impending judgments; but he earnestly wished to know what the intention of this remarkable vision was, and therefore he took the best methods in his power to be truly informed.

Ver. 6, 7. “Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream. Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers; and I told the dream before them; but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof.”

The first time that Nebuchadnezzar dreamed, he forgot his dream, and required the magicians, &c. to tell him both his dream, and the interpretation of the same: they desired to be excused from telling the dream, but they promised over and over, that if the king would tell his servants the dream, they would shew him the interpretation. He had now a fair opportunity of trying them, whether they were any better than mere cheats and jugglers; and such he found them to be; for though he told his dream very particularly, yet they were as much at a loss as before, and could by no means give the least hint respecting the interpretation. The King however appeared much more mild and placable than before; he did not at this time threaten them with death because they could not interpret his dream; they were in little or no danger now, there was one in the city whom the King knew could certainly interpret it; and his calling in all the magicians first, only served as a foil to set off Daniel to the greater advantage.

Ver. 8, 9. " But at the last Daniel came in before
" me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to
" the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit
" of the Holy Gods; and before him I told the
" dream, saying. O Belteshazzar, master of the
" magicians, because I know that the spirit of the
" Holy Gods is in thee, and no secret troubleth
" thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have
" seen, and the interpretation thereof."

It

It might well be said of Daniel, and his companions, as in chap. i. 20. “ And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.” This was particularly true of Daniel, in whom the spirit of wisdom and holiness dwelt in a most peculiar manner, and who was celebrated, even in his life time, for piety, wisdom and prudence; and gained not only the approbation of his fellow creatures, but the applause of God himself, who mentions him or alludes to him four times in one chapter, in company with Noah and Job, as being eminent for great piety, sincerity, and uprightness of conduct. See Ezek. xiv. 14, 16, 18, 20. And in the same prophecy his wisdom is placed in the most conspicuous light, when the prince of Tyrus is reprovèd for his vain pride and self-conceit, imagining himself to be as God. “ Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee.” Chap. xxviii. 3.

And the angel of the Lord addressèd him in the most endearing manner, “ O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, &c. Fear not, Daniel, &c. O man, greatly beloved, fear not; peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong.” Dan. x. 11, 12, 19.

There are but few characters that ever existed so highly commended, and so little blamed as Daniel; I cannot find the least intimation of any thing to his disadvantage in all the Bible, that most sacred and impartial

impartial history; but much is recorded in his favour. He ranks high as a prophet, and is mentioned as such by our Saviour himself. See St. Matt. xxiv. 15. St. Mark xiii. 14.

His character is beautiful, and a volume might be written upon it, but time will not permit me to be prolix, but I thought it might be useful to follow the royal writer in his account, and it appears that he was not so wholly taken up with the great things that God had wrought for himself, but what he could find a place in his narrative to celebrate the sublime virtues that dwelt in Daniel. He describes him by his proper name *Daniel*, then by the name *Belteshazzar*, which he had given him out of the great regard that he had for his wisdom, according to the name of the god of the Babylonians; but best of all he describes him by the spirit that was in him, even *the spirit of the Holy Gods*. He then informs us of the respectful manner in which he addressed himself to Daniel. First, he called him by the name which he had given him, *Belteshazzar*, then he denominates him *master of the magicians*, forasmuch as he exceeded them all in wisdom and knowledge, farther than the most compleat master of any art or science exceeds the scholar that has only begun to learn its first principles. Then he bears open witness that he knew that the spirit of the Holy Gods dwelt in Daniel, and that no secret troubled or puzzled him; and with the greatest earnestness he besought the faithful prophet to tell him the interpretation of his dream, and the

the visions of his head, which he then proceeded to relate before him.

Ver. 10, 11, 12. " Thus were the visions of
" mine head in my bed; I saw, and behold, a tree in
" the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was
" great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the
" height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight
" thereof to the end of all the earth. The leaves
" thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and
" in it was meat for all; the beasts of the field had
" shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven
" dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed
" of it."

This metaphor of a tree to represent an extraordinary person, a king, or even a kingdom, is not only extremely beautiful and pertinent, but is frequently found in scripture. The figure of a tree is used both for good and bad persons, if there is any thing great and extraordinary in their character or situation. Thus Jacob said of Joseph his son, " Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose
" branches run over the wall," &c. Gen. xlix. 22.

In the parable put forth by Jotham, he compared men to trees, who went forth to choose a king over them, and gave the offer to the olive tree, the fig-tree, and the vine, who all nobly refused to leave usefulness for honour; but the bramble that was wholly useless, had the offer, and accepted it. See Judges ix. 8—15.

David

David, in the first psalm, compares the righteous man to “ A tree planted by the rivers of water, that
 “ bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf
 “ also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall
 “ prosper.” Ver. 3.

The same metaphor is used by Jer. chap. xvii. 7, 8. “ Blessed is the man that trusteth in JEHOVAH,
 “ and whose hope JEHOVAH is; for he shall be as a
 “ tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out
 “ her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat
 “ cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not
 “ be careful in the year of drought, neither shall
 “ cease from yielding fruit.”

Balaam, in his prophecy, compared the children of Israel in their tents, to “ gardens by the river’s side,
 “ to the trees of lign aloes which JEHOVAH hath
 “ planted, and to cedar trees beside the waters.”
 Numb. xxiv. 6.

David says. “ The righteous shall flourish like
 “ the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.” Psal. xcii. 12.

And he speaks of Israel as a vine, saying, “ Thou
 “ hast brought a vine out of Egypt; thou hast cast
 “ out the heathen, and planted it. Thou preparedst
 “ room before it, and didst cause it to take
 “ deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were
 “ covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs
 “ thereof were like the goodly cedars. She sent out
 “ her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto
 “ the river.” Psal. Lxxx. 8, 9, 10, 11.

He

He speaks also of the prosperous wicked under the figure of a tree, saying, "I have seen the wicked
" in great power, spreading himself like a green
" bay tree. Yet he passed away, and lo, he was
" not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be
" found." Psal. xxxvii. 35, 36.

And of himself he says, "But I am like a green
" olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the
" mercy of God for ever and ever." Psal. lii. 8.

The prophet Ezekiel was ordered to put forth a parable to the house of Israel, wherein the king and princes of the house of David were compared to the highest branch of the cedar, and the top of his twigs, which were carried into Babylon, and set in the city of merchants; and the king's seed that was left, even Zedekiah, was planted in a fruitful field, and placed by great waters, and set as a willow tree, which grew, and became a spreading vine of low stature, &c. but was threatened with blasting and destruction, for breaking covenant with the king of Babylon, and joining affinity with Egypt. And at the close of the chapter, God is pleased to represent Christ and his kingdom under the same beautiful figure, saying, "Thus saith Adonai JEHOVAH, I
" will also take of the highest branch of the high
" cedar, and will set it: I will crop off from the
" top of his young twigs a tender one, and will
" plant it upon an high mountain and eminent.
" In the mountain of the height of Israel will I
" plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and
" bear

“ bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar; and under it
 “ shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the sha-
 “ dow of the branches thereof shall they dwell.
 “ And all the trees of the field shall know, that I,
 “ JEHOVAH, have brought down the high tree,
 “ have exalted the low tree, have dried up the
 “ green tree, and have made the dry tree to flou-
 “ rish : I, JEHOVAH, have spoken, and have done
 “ it.” Ezek. xvii. 22, 23, 24.

Many other passages might be brought, if need-ful, to shew that kings and kingdoms are represented by trees; but these shall suffice.

The tree which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream, very aptly described himself in his prosperous and flourishing estate, his universal dominion, and well-established empire, as Daniel interpreted the mat-ter, and, therefore, I shall reserve what I have fur-ther to say upon this subject, till I have read his wise, just, and exact interpretation.

Ver. 13, 14, 15, 16. “ I saw in the visions of
 “ my head upon my bed, and behold, a watcher
 “ and an holy one came down from Heaven; he
 “ cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree,
 “ and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves,
 “ and scatter his fruit : let the beasts get away from
 “ under it, and the fowls from his branches. Ne-
 “ vertheless, leave the stump of his roots in the
 “ earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the
 “ tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with
 “ the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with
 “ the

“ the beasts in the grass of the earth. Let his heart
“ be changed from man’s, and let a beast’s heart be
“ given unto him; and let seven times pass over
“ him.”

This watcher that appeared to the king in his dream, who came down from Heaven, was either one of the highest of the holy angels, or rather, the angel JEHOVAH, who frequently appeared before his incarnation, as to Adam, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, and others. He is a watcher indeed; one to whom all things are naked and opened, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, and who trieth the reins and the hearts. He is also an holy one, as well as a watcher, and one that had authority to command according to his pleasure, and whose servants were ready to obey his word. The command to hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, to shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: to cause the beasts to get away from his shadow, and the fowls from his branches, is most certainly a lively and picturesque view of the downfall of the king of Babylon, and the loss of his power and authority.

Having given orders for the cutting down the tree, &c. he intimates a design that it should not be wholly destroyed; the leaving the stump of his roots in the earth, and letting it be wet with the dew of heaven, like the tender grass of the field, seems evidently to hold forth that there was still some hope respecting the tree; that beautiful passage in Job seems to the purpose, “ For there is hope of a tree,
“ if

“ if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and
 “ that the tender branch thereof, will not cease.
 “ Though the root thereof wax old in the earth,
 “ and the stock thereof die in the ground; yet
 “ through the scent of water it will bud, and bring
 “ forth boughs like a plant.” Job. xiv. 7, 8, “.

From this place the dream changes its form, and almost interprets itself, for leaving the similitude of a tree, it seems to speak plainly of a man having his portion with the beasts in the grass of the earth; and having his heart changed from man's, and a beast's heart being given to him. So that but little more seemed necessary to interpret the dream, than to be assured that it was prophetic, (which was very evident by the many remarkable circumstances thereof, the awful solemnity with which the command was delivered, and the impression which it left upon the mind of the king;) and also to know of whom the vision spake. And therefore as soon as it was known that the tree represented Nebuchadnezzar, it seemed plain that he for a time should lose his power, authority, and even his reason, and be transformed into a brute, and become like a beast, and feed upon grass. The seven times that the watcher said should pass over him, always strike me as so many years, which will, I think, appear evident to all my readers, from some circumstances which appear in the history.

Ver. 17. “ This matter is by the decree of the
 “ watchers, and the demand by the word of the
 “ Holy

“ Holy Ones; to the intent that the living may
 “ know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom
 “ of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and
 “ setteth up over it the basest of men.”

This verse is worthy of our particular attention, and contains much information.

The Watchers are the Elohim that created the heaven, and the earth, and all things. The Lord JEHOVAH, and his Messenger, and his Holy Spirit. This matter was appointed by their decree; these Holy Ones spake the word, and it took effect. It seems evident to me, that God, and not his creatures, are intended by the Watchers, who *decree*, and the Holy Ones, who *demand*; as all things take place according to their *word*. For it is contrary to reason to suppose that mere created beings have power to decree, and to execute their purposes; to pull down, and to set up, to build, and to overthrow, and to rule the affairs of the world of mankind. Besides, this matter was to be brought to pass on purpose that all men might know and acknowledge *that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will*; but how would this be evident if the Watchers, and Holy Ones, who decreed, and brought it to pass according to their word, were only created beings? In that case the contrary would be apparent, viz. that creatures, and not the most High, govern the world. Therefore, to me it is abundantly manifest, that the Watchers and Holy Ones, are no other than the divine Elohim, the Gods

who created the heaven and the earth, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

The most High over-rules the affairs of men, and disposes of the kingdoms of the world according to his pleasure; he has purposes in view that to us appear dark and intricate; thus when he setteth up the vilest, most wicked, and basest of men as rulers and governors, how dark and gloomy the dispensation! But when we consider this dreadful judgment of base, wicked, vile, unjust rulers, as sent for the same purpose as wars, famines, pestilences, plagues, earthquakes, and other terrible evils that desolate the globe; for the punishment of the sinful inhabitants of the world; we can account for this most dreadful calamity of wicked and tyrannical government, by the same rule that we can account for a great many other plagues that fall upon the rebellious children of men.—

It is no real sign of worth, virtue, goodness, or even great natural or acquired abilities, when mortals are raised to a superior station over their fellow creatures; for frequently they are the very basest of men, who are thus exalted, and often the fittest instruments to punish the wickedness of the nations over which they are placed, and to torment and destroy mankind, who are devoted to destruction because of their rebellion against God. He is just in all his ways, and holy in all his works; and by viewing the matter in this light we may reconcile this darkest scene

with

with the goodness of God, and the excellency of the divine character.

Happy is the nation which is blest with mild, just, and righteous government, calculated for the happiness of the subjects. David the good king of Israel, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, among his last words has given us a description of what a king or ruler should be, and the blessings of a mild, just, and equal government.

“ The Spirit of JEHOVAH spake by me, and his
 “ word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said,
 “ the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth
 “ over men (or that ruleth in Adam) must be just,
 “ ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the
 “ light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a
 “ morning without clouds; as the tender grass spring-
 “ ing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.”

2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3, 4.

This kind of government is a blessing to mankind, almost as valuable as the light of the sun; mild as the morning without clouds, and beautiful as the field and pastures in the charming month of May, when after the reviving showers of Spring, the clear shining of the sun succeeds, and causes the grass to spring out of the earth, all tender and lovely. Good government draws forth the genius of the people, encourages industry, rewards merit, and raises virtue to eminence and glory. It causes vice to hide its baneful head, as the rising sun causes the beasts of prey to lie down in their dens, the birds

of night to fly far away ; and the useful animals to come forth. But alas ! how few of the nations of the earth are as yet blest with kings and rulers in any measure resembling the light of the morning when the sun riseth, &c. But in the Millenium all nations shall be thus happy, as I have shewn already ; though at present, and in all past ages, emperors and kings have generally been the scourges and plagues of mankind, and so far from being the best and noblest of their kind, they have been the basest of men. Blessed be God, there have been, and are now, some glorious exceptions, and those kings and rulers cannot be sufficiently esteemed, who study to promote the glory of God, and the happiness of mankind.

Pardon this digression, if such it may be called, Let us now return to Nebuchadnezzar.

Ver. 18. “ This dream I king Nebuchadnezzar have seen. Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation ; but thou art able ; for the spirit of the Holy Gods is in thee.”

The King both prefaced and concluded his dream with an address to Daniel, expressive of his amazing desire to know its meaning, his confidence that the sacred Prophet was able to tell him the interpretation of the vision, and the ground of that confidence, because the spirit of the Holy Gods was found constantly dwelling in the breast of that man of God.

When

When wisdom and holiness are joined together in any person, how awful and majestic they cause him to appear ! How far superior to himself Nebuchadnezzar, the mighty conqueror, saw and felt Daniel, the captive, at that moment to be ! Daniel seemed like the Judge on the throne, having heard the cause, now ready to pass sentence, while Nebuchadnezzar was like the criminal at the bar, waiting with anxious trembling suspense to hear his doom.

Ver. 19. " Then Daniel whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. The king spake and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream or the interpretation thereof trouble thee. Belteshazzar answered and said, My Lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies."

Daniel was greatly astonished and agitated in mind at this remarkable dream; he saw what was coming upon his royal master, and like a good courtier trembled for his situation, and pitied his case. He remained one hour in amazement, and was almost overwhelmed with grief and trouble. Out of this situation, the monarch roused him by encouraging words, and exhorted him not to be cast down at what was contained in the dream; nor to be troubled, or afraid to interpret it. Daniel, far from wishing evil to the King, that led him, and his nation into captivity, seemed to entertain a real kindness and regard for him. And indeed, the conduct of Nebuchadnezzar, on this occasion, seemed to have

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something

something much more noble, open, and generous in it than before, and which might have caused Daniel to regret, and lament the necessity he was under of delivering such a threatening and unwelcome message to him. Nevertheless, he took courage, and strengthened himself, and with a noble firmness of mind, joined with tenderness, he explained the dreadful decree that was gone forth against the king.

-Ver. 20, 21, 22. "The tree that thou sawest,
" which grew, and was strong, whose height reached
" unto the heaven, and the sight thereof unto all the
" earth; whose leaves were fair, and the fruit there-
" of much, and in it was meat for all; under which
" the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose
" branches the fowls of the heaven had their habi-
" tation: It is thou, O king, that art grown and
" become strong; for thy greatness is grown, and
" reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the
" end of the earth."

The great power and universal dominion of Nebuchadnezzar, was represented in his first dream by the head of gold upon the image which he saw; and Daniel explained and commented thus upon it,—
"Thou O king, art a king of kings; for the God
" of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power,
" and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the
" children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and
" the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine
" hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all."
Chap. ii. 37, 38.

His

His dominion was very extensive, and his power exceeding great, as I shewed in the last Lecture; and in this dream he is set forth by a tall, shady, fair and fruitful tree, under which the beasts of the field gathered, and in whose branches the fowls of heaven had their habitation; representing all nations, people, kindreds and tongues, all sorts and conditions of men, who composed his subjects, whose countries he had subdued, and who had submitted to his government, and yielded to his sway.

Ver. 23, 24, 25, 26. “ And whereas the king
“ saw a Watcher, and an Holy One coming down
“ from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down,
“ and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots
“ thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and
“ brags, in the tender grafs of the field; and let it
“ be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his por-
“ tion be with the beasts of the field, till seven
“ times pass over him: This is the interpretation,
“ O king, and this is the decree of the most High,
“ which is come upon my lord the king: That
“ they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwell-
“ ling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they
“ shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven
“ times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the
“ most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and
“ giveth it to whomsoever he will. And whereas
“ they commanded to leave the stump of the tree-
“ roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after

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“ that

“ that thou shalt have known that the heavens do
“ rule.”

This was a very melancholy, awful and affecting message; it is almost a wonder that the King had courage or patience to hear it; but for ought that appears, he heard it with great composure, and even suffered in addition, a very serious word of exhortation at the close. Where is there a king now living on earth that would bear such plain dealing? or where the honest and faithful courtier, or even minister of the gospel that would dare to give it? And surely Daniel must have been supported by the arm of God, or his courage and strength must have failed him in this most difficult, yet necessary duty. It certainly must have been very humiliating to the proudest and greatest monarch in the world, to be told that he was doomed to be driven from his throne, and deprived of all his power, authority and greatness; and not only so, but to be informed that he was to be banished from human society, and to have his dwelling, portion, and food with the beasts of the field, and that he should be compelled to eat grass as oxen, and should have his body wet with the dew of heaven, and in all respects fare like a brute.

But terrible as this message was, there were several hopeful circumstances included therein, and which might give a distant prospect of returning felicity. As first, The periods that were mentioned, *till seven times pass over him*, seemed evidently to imply that

that his misery should not always continue, nor indeed last till the end of his life, but for certain seasons only.

Secondly, This dreadful punishment of his pride was intended to answer a most valuable purpose; not only to be an example to those who should behold him, and to make *the living know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will*; but the king himself was to have this same divine knowledge, and that by experience; so that his sufferings were only in some measure to be proportioned to his pride and haughtiness, and to last till seven times should pass over him, even till he should *know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will*.

Here was a glorious end to be answered, not only to the honour of God's justice, and the warning of others, but his own good, to humble and subdue the sufferer himself; and prepare him, by the deepest shame, for the return of his former dignity.

Thirdly, He was told that his kingdom should be sure unto him, after that he should have *known that the heavens do rule*. This was a wonderful providence, that none should seek to overturn the kingdom during the King's insanity, and that after his recovery he should regain the same esteem and honour as before.

But are there any that will be so mad as to say, (notwithstanding these three favourable things) that his punishment was not very dreadful; even though
it

it was limited, intended for his good, and that his restoration to his former glory was sure?

Daniel thought it was a serious matter, or it would not have given him so much concern; but if *limited punishment* is such a *trifle*, such a *nothing*, as some make it to be, how came it to be worthy of God, to shew it to the king in such an awful vision, and cause it to be interpreted by Daniel with so much solemnity, and the sentence afterwards to be formally pronounced by an audible voice from heaven, and executed with so much exactness? Was all this worthy of God, if limited punishment is of no consequence, as many pretend? It is evident that his punishment, though limited only to seven years, answered the purpose for which it was sent; and this was enough: and why *limited punishment* should not answer all the intentions of God in punishing his creatures, either here, or hereafter, I believe none can tell.

After the prophet Daniel had finished the interpretation of the dream, he proceeded to give the astonished monarch some excellent advice.

Ver. 27. "Wherefore, O king, let my counsel
 " be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins
 " by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing
 " mercy to the poor; it may be a lengthening of
 " thy tranquility," or as the margin has it, *an healing of thine error*.

How suitable and wholesome was this advice! The prophet seemed to wish that it might be acceptable

table to the king; and so all true messengers and ministers of the Lord earnestly desire that their advice might be well received by those to whom they speak; but alas! how often they are denied that satisfaction, as it appears Daniel was in this instance. The counsel which he gave the king, however unfashionable among many moderns, was exactly according to the mind of God, and such as he sent by the mouth of all his prophets, whenever they went forth to warn sinners in the name of the Lord.

“ Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil
“ of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to
“ do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve
“ the oppressed; judge the fatherless, plead for the
“ widow.” Isai. i. 16, 17. “ Let the wicked for-
“ sake his way, and the unrighteous man his
“ thoughts; and let him return unto JEHOVAH, and
“ he will have mercy upon him; and to our God,
“ for he will abundantly pardon.” Chap. lv. 7.

“ Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to loose
“ the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy bur-
“ dens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that
“ ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread
“ to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that
“ are cast out to thine house? when thou seest the
“ naked that thou cover him; and that thou hide
“ not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy
“ light break forth as the morning, and thine health
“ shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness
“ shall go before thee; the glory of JEHOVAH shall
“ be thy re-reward. Then shalt thou call, and
“ JEHOVAH

it was limited, intended for his good, and that his restoration to his former glory was sure?

Daniel thought it was a serious matter, or it would not have given him so much concern; but if *limited punishment* is such a *trifle*, such a *nothing*, as some make it to be, how came it to be worthy of God, to shew it to the king in such an awful vision, and cause it to be interpreted by Daniel with so much solemnity, and the sentence afterwards to be formally pronounced by an audible voice from heaven, and executed with so much exactness? Was all this worthy of God, if limited punishment is of no consequence, as many pretend? It is evident that his punishment, though limited only to seven years, answered the purpose for which it was sent; and this was enough: and why *limited punishment* should not answer all the intentions of God in punishing his creatures, either here, or hereafter, I believe none can tell.

After the prophet Daniel had finished the interpretation of the dream, he proceeded to give the astonished monarch some excellent advice.

Ver. 27. "Wherefore, O king, let my counsel
 " be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins
 " by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing
 " mercy to the poor; it may be a lengthening of
 " thy tranquility," or as the margin has it, *an healing of thine error*.

How suitable and wholesome was this advice! The prophet seemed to wish that it might be acceptable

table to the king; and so all true messengers and ministers of the Lord earnestly desire that their advice might be well received by those to whom they speak; but alas! how often they are denied that satisfaction, as it appears Daniel was in this instance. The counsel which he gave the king, however unfashionable among many moderns, was exactly according to the mind of God, and such as he sent by the mouth of all his prophets, whenever they went forth to warn sinners in the name of the Lord.

“ Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil
“ of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to
“ do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve
“ the oppressed; judge the fatherless, plead for the
“ widow.” Isai. i. 16, 17. “ Let the wicked for-
“ sake his way, and the unrighteous man his
“ thoughts; and let him return unto JEHOVAH, and
“ he will have mercy upon him; and to our God,
“ for he will abundantly pardon.” Chap. lv. 7.

“ Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to loose
“ the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy bur-
“ dens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that
“ ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread
“ to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that
“ are cast out to thine house? when thou seest the
“ naked that thou cover him; and that thou hide
“ not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy
“ light break forth as the morning, and thine health
“ shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness
“ shall go before thee; the glory of JEHOVAH shall
“ be thy re-reward. Then shalt thou call, and
“ JEHOVAH

“ JEHOVAH shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he
 “ shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from
 “ the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of
 “ the finger, and speaking vanity; and if thou draw
 “ out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the af-
 “ flicted soul; then shall thy light rise out of ob-
 “ scurity, and thy darkness be as the noon-day.”
 Chap. lviii. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

This is the language of the evangelical prophet
 Isaiah. And the same kind is found in Jeremiah,
 to whom the Lord said, “ Go down to the house of
 “ the king of Judah, and speak there this word,
 “ and say, Hear the word of JEHOVAH, O king of
 “ Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David, thou,
 “ and thy servants, and thy people that enter in by
 “ these gates. Thus saith JEHOVAH; Execute ye
 “ judgment and righteousness, and deliver the
 “ spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do
 “ no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fa-
 “ therless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent
 “ blood in this place.” Jer. xxii. 1, 2, 3.

Happy would it have been for the kings and
 princes, and people of Judah, if they had taken the
 good advice which God gave them by Isaiah, Jere-
 miah, and all the Prophets. And who can tell what
 favour would have been shewn to Nebuchadnezzar
 if he had hearkened to the wise counsel of Daniel,
 and had broken off his sins by righteousness, and
 his iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor? And
 would it not be well for all men, if they would at-
 tend

tend to the voice of God by his holy Prophets and Apostles?

“He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth JEHOVAH require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” Micah vi. 8.

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared, teaching us, that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.” Tit. ii. 11, 12.

But to return.

Ver. 28. “All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar.”

Had the king immediately followed the counsel which the pious and faithful Daniel gave him, it might have prevented his falling so low, as to be made a companion for beasts; and would men hearken to the advice of God, they would never become partners with devils: but Nebuchadnezzar, however affected he might be at first, and doubtless he resolved to take the counsel of the Prophet, yet neglected it till his destruction came suddenly upon him; so it fares with the greater part of those who are warned to fly from the wrath to come, they may be a little moved at first, and intend to repent and turn to God, but put it off from day to day, till being often reprov'd, and hardening their necks, they are suddenly destroyed, without remedy, or reprieve.

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The judgments threatened to Nebuchadnezzar came upon him to the full; so all the dreadful threatenings which God hath denounced against stubborn offenders shall be executed upon them to the uttermost. But as the shameful punishment threatened to the king was limited, and intended for his good, and other excellent purposes, and he was at last humbled and restored, so I trust the same shall be the case with all those unhappy beings who have rebelled against their Creator, and shall be justly punished for their crimes. He became like a beast, for a time, not always so to remain; so, whatever state they may fall into, as a punishment for their transgressions, God shall finally bring them to bow to him, and afterwards he will restore them in mercy.

Ver. 29. "At the end of twelve months, he walked in the palace of the king of Babylon."

It appears that one whole year's respite, or reprieve, was allowed to Nebuchadnezzar between the sentence and the execution, on purpose to try him whether he would take the warning or not, and to give him an opportunity and space to repent and reform; but, alas! he did not improve the advantages that were afforded him, but probably hardened his mind as much, or more than ever during that period. So God gives to many a space to repent, but they repent not, and are therefore suddenly overtaken with fore and dreadful calamities, as travail comes upon a woman with child, from which they cannot escape.

Nebuchadnezzar

Nebuchadnezzar was walking in (or upon) the palace of the king of Babylon, quite thoughtless of his approaching fate, and not only quite unconcerned about it, but indulging the most haughty, proud, vain-glorious thoughts, which he uttered in boasting expressions.

Ver. 30. "The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?"

It is thought by many that the king was walking in one of the uppermost of his hanging gardens, from whence he could survey the whole city, when he uttered this proud speech: he certainly appears to have been on some eminence, and which was either on the roof of his glorious palace, or in some one of these magnificent gardens, the like to which were not known in all the universe.

How true those maxims of the wisest of men!

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." Prov. xvi. 18.

"When pride cometh, then cometh shame; but with the lowly is wisdom." Chap. xi. 2.

"Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility." Chap. xviii. 12.

"The fear of JEHOVAH is the instruction of wisdom, and before honour is humility." Chap. xv. 33.

The heart of Nebuchadnezzar was greatly lifted up, and his mind was hardened with pride, or he could

could never have made use of his tongue in such a vain-glorious manner. Destruction was just at the door when he, as before mentioned, expressed himself.

Babylon was indeed a great and mighty city; and though it was begun by Nimrod, and Semiramis had built a considerable part thereof, yet Nebuchadnezzar had so greatly enlarged, beautified, and adorned it, that he might be said to have given splendor and majesty thereto, and had made it worthy of the name of *an imperial city, the lady of kingdoms, the house of the kingdom of Chaldaea*. By the greatness of his riches, and the might of his power, he had raised it to such eminence and glory, and this he had also done for the honour of his majesty, and that he might have it for a subject to glory in; and certainly it was a most enchanting view that he had, but it proved a fatal sight to him, and suddenly threw him into the vortex that waited for him, as it caused his tongue to utter that speech, which was immediately answered by a voice from heaven, denouncing the speedy execution of that sentence which Daniel had pronounced a year before, and which, though it had been suspended so long, was still in force.

Ver. 31, 32. "While the word was in the king's
 "mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying,
 "O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken;
 "The kingdom is departed from thee, and they
 "shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall
 "be with the beasts of the field: they shall make
 "thee

“ thee to eat grafs as oxen, and seven times shall
 “ pass over thee, until thou know that the most
 “ High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth
 “ it to whomsoever he will.”

What a sudden and awful alarm was this! just while he was exulting in the grandeur and glory of the city, and adoring the great idol SELF, he heard this thundering voice from heaven, (which could be no deception,) that addressed the king by name, and therefore made the matter certain and particular in the highest degree; it informed him that the kingdom, however glorious, was departed from him, and then repeated nearly the same words as Daniel did when he interpreted the dream, only the voice from heaven did not mention the circumstance of his being wet with the dew of heaven, which he heard in the vision, and which the Prophet interpreted, by saying, *And they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven.* Which circumstance was fulfilled, as well as all the rest that were foretold.

Daniel's interpretation was like the sentence pronounced by a just, merciful, tender-hearted, and compassionate Judge upon a criminal at the bar; but the voice from heaven was like the death-warrant, read by the officer of justice immediately before the execution.

Ver. 33. “ The same hour was the thing fulfilled
 “ upon Nebuchadnezzar; and he was driven from
 “ men, and did eat grafs as oxen, and his body

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“ was

“ was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were
“ grown like eagles feathers, and his nails like birds
“ claws.”

The awful voice that came from heaven filled the soul of the monarch with terror and confusion; from that hour his reason was depraved, and he that before sought to be adored as a god, now imagined himself to be transformed into a brute, and had all the fierceness, and rage of a savage beast. And for seven years his body was wet with the dew of heaven, for it is plain by the state of his hair being like eagles feathers, &c. that it could not be much less: The expression *seven times shall pass over thee*, cannot imply any thing less than seven whole seasons; and so the words are generally understood.

O what an humiliating sight it must have been to see such a mighty conqueror as Nebuchadnezzar was, feeding upon grass as oxen, without clothing or shelter!

The ingenious author of the travels of Cyrus, after giving a description of Babylon, and the decorations which Nebuchadnezzar had added to it, says,
“ The author, or rather the creator, of so many
“ prodigies, equal to Hercules in bravery, and superior to the greatest men by his genius, was, after
“ incredible successes, fallen into a kind of madness,
“ he imagined himself transformed into a beast, and
“ had all the fierceness of one.

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“ The prince (Cyrus) being informed (by an illustrious Hebrew) that the people of God (the Jews) did not look upon the king's frenzy as a natural distemper, but as a punishment from heaven, enquired of him the cause of it.

“ Nebuchadnezzar, said the Hebrew sage, being led away by impious men who were about him, came at length to such an excess of irreligion, that he blasphemed against the most High, and to crown his impiety, he made of some of our sacred vessels, and of the riches which he had brought from his expedition into Judea, a golden statue, of an enormous size, and resembling his own person. He had it erected, and consecrated, in the plain of Dura, and commanded that it should be adored by all his subjects.

“ He was admonished by divine dreams, that he should be punished for his idolatry and pride in this life. A Hebrew, named Daniel, a man famous for science, virtue, and his knowledge of futurity, explained to him those dreams, and denounced God's judgments upon him, which were ready to break forth.

“ The words of the Prophet made some impression upon the king's mind ; but being surrounded by prophanemen, who despised the heavenly powers, he neglected the divine admonition, and gave himself up anew to his impiety.

" At the end of the year, while he is walking in
 " his gardens, admiring the beauty of his own
 " works, the splendour of his glory, and the great-
 " ness of his empire; he exalts himself above huma-
 " nity, and becomes an idolater of his own proud
 " imaginations. He hears a voice from heaven,
 " saying, *O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken,*
 " *The kingdom is departed from thee, &c.*

" In the same hour was the thing fulfilled, and
 " his reason was taken from him. He was seized
 " with a frenzy, and with fits of raging madness.
 " In vain they attempted to hold him by chains; he
 " broke all his fetters, and ran away into the moun-
 " tains, roaring like a lion. No one can approach
 " him, without danger. He has no repose, except
 " one day in the week, which is the Sabbath. Then
 " his reason returns, and he holds discourses worthy
 " of admiration. It is now almost seven years that
 " he has been in this condition, and we are expect-
 " ing his total deliverance in a few days, according
 " to the Divine prediction.

" The morning of the Sabbath, Cyrus, accompa-
 " nied by his instructor, went to the place which
 " the king of Babylon frequented. They beheld
 " the unfortunate prince come down from the hills,
 " and lie down under some willows which were
 " upon the banks of the river. They approach
 " him in silence: he was stretched upon the grass;
 " his eyes turned towards heaven; and sending
 " forth

“ forth from time to time deep sighs, accompa-
“ nied with bitter tears. In the midst of his mis-
“ fortunes there was still upon his face an air of
“ greatness, which shewed that the most High
“ in punishing had not forsaken him. They for-
“ bore out of respect, to speak to him, or to interrupt
“ the profound grief in which he was plunged.

“ Cyrus, deeply struck with the sad condition of
“ this great Prince, stood immoveable, and on his
“ countenance appeared all the tokens of a soul
“ seized with terror and compassion. The king of
“ Babylon observed it, and without knowing who
“ he was, said to him, Heaven suffers me to have
“ intervals of reason, to make me sensible, that I do
“ not possess it as a property; that a superior Being
“ takes it from me, and restores it, when he
“ pleases; and that he who gives it me is a sove-
“ reign intelligence, who holds all nature in his
“ hand, and can dispose it in order, or overturn it,
“ according to his pleasure.

“ Heretofore, being blinded by pride, and cor-
“ rupted by prosperity, I said within myself, and
“ to all the false friends who were about me :
“ *We are born, as it were by chance, and after death*
“ *we shall be, as if we had never been. The soul is a*
“ *spark of fire, which goes out when the body is reduced*
“ *to ashes. Come, let us enjoy the present good: let us*
“ *make haste to exhaust all pleasures. Let us drink the*
“ *most delicious wines, and perfume ourselves with odi-*
“ *ferous*

“ferous oils. Let us crown ourselves with roses before
 “they wither. Let strength be our only law, and plea-
 “sure the rule of our duty. Let us make the just fall
 “into our snares, because he dishonours us by his virtue.
 “Let us try him with affronts and torments, that we
 “may see whether he be sincere. Thus it was that I
 “blasphemed against heaven, and this is the source
 “of my miseries. Alas ! I have but too much de-
 “served them.

“Scarce had he pronounced these words, when
 “he started up, ran away, and hid himself in the
 “neighbouring forest. This sad spectacle aug-
 “mented the respect Cyrus had for the Deity, and
 “redoubled his desire of being instructed in the
 “religion of the Hebrews.” *Travels of Cyrus, Book*
viii.

It must have been a very affecting sight to behold Nebuchadnezzar in this deplorable condition, reduced to a level with brutes, who was the powerful king of mighty nations ; but it was an excellent lesson to those who beheld him, and it was finally of the greatest advantage to himself. But I must defer this part of my subject until another opportunity, as I have taken up more time in speaking of his humiliation than I expected.

I have in one of my former Lectures spoken of the punishment of the devil and his angels in the lake of fire and brimstone ; this most dreadful state must be their lot ; and who can abide it ? It is an awful
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and very affecting thought, that any of those beings that God created for his glory, should be doomed to such a painful state of woe ; but their rebellion against their Creator is the real cause, and their subjection to him the grand design. But the important enquiry, whether there is any probability of their restoration to a state of favour and happiness, must be also deferred to the next Lecture, when I shall take up this question, and throw what light I am able upon it, both from reason and revelation.

END OF THE THIRTY-EIGHTH LECTURE.

LECTURE XXVIII.

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END OF THE THIRTY-EIGHTH LECTURE.

LECTURE XXXIX.

THE HISTORY OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR,

CONTINUED AND CONCLUDED.

His Restoration and Re-exaltation. The plain marks of his wonderful and most miraculous Conversion to God. A short Summary of his Confession of Faith, the same expressed in the exact Words of Scripture.

Nothing can be impossible to Him who wrought so great a change in that Haughty Tyrant. And there is reason to believe that the same GOD will finally bring his most stubborn Enemies, the Haughty Monarchs of the Earth, and the Fallen Angels to humble themselves, before him, and finally to love and praise him their Great Creator and Restorer. Scripture passages favourable to that Hypothesis cited and explained.

WE are now come to the most glorious part of this very important and interesting history, the recovery of Nebuchadnezzar, from his madness,

his true conversion to God, and restoration to his former dignity and glory. These are the great signs and mighty wonders he thought good to declare and make known to all people, nations and languages that dwelt on the face of the earth. I shall proceed as in the last Lecture, to follow his account of this wonderful change, wrought upon him by the power and grace of God.

Dan. iv. 34, 35. “ And at the end of the days, I
“ Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven,
“ and mine understanding returned unto me, and I
“ blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured
“ him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an
“ everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from
“ generation to generation: And all the inhabi-
“ tants of the earth are as nothing: and he doeth ac-
“ cording to his will in the army of heaven, and
“ among the inhabitants of the earth: and none
“ can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest
“ thou?”

In these words we have an account of the wonderful work of God, wrought upon the mind of Nebuchadnezzar, and the blessed effects of it.

At the end of the days, when the seven times or years had passed over him, he lifted up his eyes to heaven: there was a limited or appointed season, during which he was to remain like a brute, that so the evil habits he had contracted while his reason remained, might die, and his wicked ideas be wholly

forgotten; and then at the return of his understanding, new and good ideas might rise up in his mind, which was the case: God knew how long it would require to bring this about, and therefore he appointed it; his wisdom, goodness, justice, all appear and shine even in the circumstance of the time. I judge that the Great Supreme proportions both the time and degrees of the punishment of the miserable, according to the circumstances of his numerous patients; he knows exactly their evil habits, and propensities, and what is requisite to reclaim them. It is a glorious consideration that the great Physician knows every possible condition of his creatures; and what infinite wisdom, power and goodness can do for them will doubtless be done. And the time is with him, though he has not revealed it to us particularly: it is for us to know that he is wise and good, and can and will do all things well. And it seems to me certain, that he who reclaimed Nebuchadnezzar, will in due time reclaim all his fallen creatures.

Nebuchadnezzar lifted up his eyes to heaven, he looked up to God, no more did he confide in himself, no longer did he neglect his great Creator, but trusted in the Lord of heaven, and called upon his name.

In looking up to God, he did as the Scripture advises men to do; and as all sincere converts really do; they look up to the hills from whence cometh their help, their help is in the name of the Lord of

Hosts, who made heaven and earth. And as the eyes of servants are to their masters, and the eyes of maids to their mistresses, so the eyes of true penitents are to JEHOVAH, until he hath mercy upon them. God is constantly looking down upon men on earth, waiting to be gracious, his eyes are upon all their ways, and if they confess that they have sinned, and perverted that which is right, and it profited them not, he will deliver them from destruction, and from going down into the pit. And I am persuaded that God not only beholds the earth and men upon it, but he to whom destruction is naked, and before whose sight hell is open without a covering, sees all the souls in misery, and has them under care, and still considers them as objects of his compassion; and at the end of the days of their confinement, they shall lift up their eyes to God, and he will help and deliver them, and have mercy upon them. There is no help but in the Lord, and no way of obtaining help but by lifting up the eyes to him, and trusting in his mercy.

When he lifted up his eyes to heaven, then his understanding, of which he been so long deprived, returned unto him: he came to himself, and his madness ceased. He had before made himself a devil, by giving himself up to his passions, and God reduced him to the condition of a beast, by depriving him of his reason, taking away from him the heart of a man, and giving a beast's heart to him,

him, as a punishment for his pride. But when the time was past, and he returned to God, then God caused his understanding to return to him, and he became a man indeed and in truth. Nothing is so worthy of us as rational creatures, as to return to our Creator. His understanding returned to him in a manner that he had never before possessed it: he had proper ideas of the character and perfections of God; and of the relations subsisting between the Creator and creatures; his eternity, independence, self-sufficiency, infinite greatness, and absolute sovereignty over them, and their entire dependence upon him for being and support.

When his understanding returned to him, then he blessed the most High: he acknowledged God, and he adored his Creator; this was an evident mark, not only of his returning to himself, but of his true conversion to the ways of righteousness and truth. He had piety towards God, as well as benevolence towards men. He celebrated the eternity of God, the Being who is, was, and will be, that ONE who has life in himself, and of himself, the self-existent, self-sufficient, and independent being; he praised and honoured him that liveth for ever. No longer did he praise and honour the gods of gold, and silver, brass and iron, wood and stone, which could neither see, nor hear, nor know; no more did he seek, either to be adored by his subjects, or to compel them on pain of death to fall down to his idols,

and worship his gods, and graven images. He could make his prayer to the God of his life, as well as David, or Daniel, and he could praise and honour the living JEHOVAH. He repeats again, what he had said at the beginning of his address to his subjects, respecting the everlasting dominion of God, and that his kingdom is from generation to generation. This seems a favourite theme with him, he dwells upon it with rapture; and indeed, what subject is more charming than this? It is a glorious thought that JEHOVAH reigns, and governs the universe, and shall always endure, and his kingdom shall never end.

The kingdom of Christ that shall succeed all kingdoms of the world, shall last until all are subdued; and this is called everlasting. Daniel says, "I saw in the night-visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. Chap. vii. 13, 14."

When Christ shall reign, then, "The saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.." Ver. 18. "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven,

“ heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints
 “ of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlast-
 “ ing kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and
 “ obey him.” Ver. 27.

This short book of Daniel has much in it, relating to the kingdom of Christ, and of God, and the durable nature of the same.

In the interpretation of the king's first dream, Daniel says, “ And in the days of these kings shall
 “ the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall
 “ never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be
 “ left to other people, but it shall break in pieces
 “ and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall
 “ stand for ever.” Chap. ii. 44.

The proclamation of Darius is worthy of our notice, as it contains sentiments nearly similar to those mentioned by Nebuchadnezzar,

“ Then king Darius wrote unto all people, na-
 “ tions, and languages that dwell in all the earth:
 “ Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree,
 “ that in every dominion of my kingdom men
 “ tremble and fear before the God of Daniel; for
 “ he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and
 “ his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and
 “ his dominion shall be even to the end. He deliver-
 “ eth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and won-
 “ ders in heaven and in earth.” Chap. vi. 25, 26, 27.

The kingdom of Christ as Mediator shall endure till all things are subdued, then shall he resign the
 S 4 kingdom

kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all : The kingdom of universal love and delight shall take place throughout the universe, and shall continue while God exists.

This was noble confession for one to make who had considered himself as universal monarch of the world, and gloried in the title, but being convinced that God was the rightful Governor of the universe, he ascribed to him the glory and honour of universal empire, and eternal dominion.

Nebuchadnezzar had learned another lesson of great importance, (and which we should all endeavour to learn) even the greatness of God, and the littleness of all creatures; which he thus expresseth, *And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing.* The greatness of God is here elegantly set forth, his immensity is acknowledged and described by comparison : all the numerous inhabitants of the earth are as nothing compared with him. This same grand truth is found in several other parts of the sacred writings. As Psalm lxxxix. 6, 7. “ For who
“ in the heaven can be compared unto JEHOVAH?
“ who among the sons of the mighty can be likened
“ unto JEHOVAH? God is greatly to be feared in
“ the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him,”

cxiii. 4, 5, 6. “ JEHOVAH is high above all
“ nations, and his glory above the heavens. Who
“ is like unto JEHOVAH our God, who dwelleth on
“ high,

“ high, who humbleth himself to behold the things
“ that are in heaven, and in the earth?”

Isai. xl. 12, 15, 16, 17. “ Who hath measured
“ the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted
“ out heaven with a span, and comprehended the
“ dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed
“ the mountains in scales, and the hills in a
“ balance?

“ Behold the nations are as a drop of a bucket,
“ and are counted as the small dust of the balance :
“ behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little
“ thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn,
“ nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offer-
“ ing. All nations before him are as nothing; and
“ they are counted to him less than nothing, and
“ vanity.”

These great truths are directly calculated to humble proud vain man; and by the king of Babylon's confessing them openly, and proclaiming them publicly and universally, we may perceive that he was cured of his pride and haughtiness. There is nothing tends more to give men proper ideas of themselves, and their own littleness, than to be made well acquainted with the character of God, and to have true discoveries of his glorious perfections.

Such views of the greatness, dignity, and majesty of JEHOVAH, would make the proudest monarchs seem to themselves as mere insects. “ Have
“ ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not
been

“ been told you from the beginning? have ye not
 “ understood from the foundations of the earth?
 “ It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth,
 “ and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers;
 “ that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and
 “ spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in: That
 “ bringeth the princes to nothing: he maketh the
 “ judges of the earth as vanity. *Isai. xl. 21, 22, 23.*

“ O JEHOVAH my God, thou art very great;
 “ thou art clothed with honour and majesty. Who
 “ coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who
 “ stretchest out the heavens like a curtain: who
 “ layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters;
 “ who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh
 “ upon the wings of the wind.” *Psalms civ. 1, 2, 3.*

The holy Scripture is full of those glorious descriptions of God that conspire to shew his marvellous greatness, and consequently tend to humble man. I quote these passages to shew that Nebuchadnezzar had proper ideas of the divine character, agreeable to the discoveries that were made by the Holy Spirit to the Prophets; and consequently that he had his knowledge from the same divine source.

Next to the *Greatness* of God, Nebuchadnezzar mentions his *absolute Sovereignty* over all creatures and all things. God certainly has a right to govern the universe which he hath made, and to dispose of all things therein according to his own good will and pleasure. This cannot be disputed; but we are happy

happy to know that this wise and sovereign intelligence, is infinitely good, and never deals unjustly with any. And whatever he is pleased to do shall issue in his highest glory, and the greatest happiness of the universe at large. *He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth*; was that very acknowledgement that he was required to make, and he was humbled for that purpose, and until the time that he should know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will: He was made to know and confess that the heavens did rule, and that the will of the Supreme was the law of the universe; and that he would perform his pleasure without asking leave of any of the creatures which his hands have formed. God is not only the rightful Sovereign of heaven and earth, and may purpose what he pleases concerning his own works; (since he can purpose nothing but what shall terminate in his own glory and their good) but his will shall be done, *none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?*

Infinite power belongs to God, as well as infinite wisdom and goodness; therefore his purposes shall certainly be accomplished, and cannot fail.

Nothing can be more absurd than to suppose the Deity wanting in either of these three great perfections; If he had not *Wisdom*, he could not direct his counsels aright; if he were not possessed of universal

versal *Goodness*, he could not be God; and if his *Power* did not equal his *Wisdom*, or *Goodness*, he might not always be able to make his words good.

But if we attend to the declaration of divine truth we shall find, that though “There are many devices in a man’s heart, nevertheless the counsel of JEHOVAH, that shall stand.” Prov. xix. 21.

“There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against JEHOVAH.” Chap. xxi. 30.

He says, by the prophet Isaiah, “Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me: declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also do it.” Isai. xlvi. 9, 10, 11.

“Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let (or hinder) it?” Chap. xliii. 13.

Hundreds of texts might be brought in confirmation of this great truth, and the constant fulfilling of prophecy confirms it beyond all contradiction: for if he could not perform his pleasure, and do his will, there could be no certainty that the prophecies would be accomplished; but as none of them have
hitherto

hitherto failed, we may conclude, that he “worketh
“all things according to the counsel of his own
“will.” Ephes. i. 11.

This acknowledgment made by Nebuchadnezzar, shews him to have been at the time a true subject of the Great King; for none can delight in his sovereignty, and absolute dominion, unless they are well affected towards his character, and government. I have dwelt long on the character of God as acknowledged by Nebuchadnezzar, as the subject is of great importance; but now we will pass to consider the history which he gives us of his restoration and re-exaltation.

Ver. 36. “At the same time my reason returned
“unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine
“honour and brightness returned unto me; and my
“counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I
“was established in my kingdom, and excellent
“majesty was added unto me.”

This was a wonderful change in his favour, and could hardly ever have been expected, had it not been expressly promised; but as it was foretold that his kingdom should be sure unto him after that he knew and acknowledged the authority of God, so it came to pass. It was a great miracle that his reason should return so suddenly, and so perfectly, after being so long, and so entirely taken away. But he that gave reason at first, could take it away as a punishment for the abuse of it; and could restore it again according to his pleasure at the appointed time.

But

But not only was his reason returned unto him; but his honour and brightness; he was again honoured and esteemed as before, and more abundantly, as he appeared to all his subjects more worthy of regard than ever. His counsellors and his lords sought unto him as before, acknowledged him as their king, made their court to him, gave him homage and reverence, and received his decrees and commands, as though there had been no interruption at all in his government. His kingdom was again given to him, and he was established therein as before: which was wonderful, considering how long he had been incapable of holding the reins of government; and what is more, there was *excellent majesty added* unto him: this appears to be an addition of glory and honour beyond whatever he had known before. Such dignity, beauty, grandeur, and glory was super-added to him as made it apparent to all about him, that God had favoured him in a most extraordinary manner.

We now come to the concluding sentence in this glorious proclamation of the humbled king of Babylon. Ver. 37. "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise
" and extol and honour the King of Heaven, all
" whose works are truth, and his ways judgment;
" and those that walk in pride he is able to
" abase."

In these words the very soul of Nebuchadnezzar, seems oppressed with a weight of gratitude too big
for

for birth, too great to be expressed. There appears a kind of redundancy in his language, *praise and extol and honour*, yet all too little to give vent to the feelings of his heart. God appeared to him as a Being possessed of all possible perfection, and worthy of all possible praise and adoration. JEHOVAH is worthy to be praised, loved, adored, and to be had in reverence of all intelligences, both on the account of his own infinitely amiable perfections, and his works of mercy, kindness, love, and favour towards his creatures. The Scriptures call upon men to praise him, sometimes on one account, and sometimes upon the other: for what he is in himself, and for what he is communicatively. I cannot pretend to cite those numerous passages of Scripture, which set forth the glorious perfections of God, and celebrate his praise, and call upon his works to adore him. But it is pleasing to observe that the spontaneous language of the heart of Nebuchadnezzar after his humiliation, was so exactly like the sentiments and expressions which are found in the inspired writings, and fervent devotions of David and the Prophets, by which his real conversion to God seems manifest.

He evidently loved, admired, praised and adored the King of Heaven, with all his heart, and with all his soul, might, mind, and strength: he acknowledged JEHOVAH to be the King of Heaven, as well as the great Ruler in the kingdom of men; and
confessed

confessed from full conviction, that *all his works are truth*, that is, full of uprightness and perfection; and *his ways judgment*: that is, just, righteous, holy, and good. As Moses says, "He is [the rock, his work " is perfect; for all his ways are judgment; a God " of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he." Deut. xxxii. 4.

And Hannah says, "There is none holy as JEHO-
" VAH: for there is none beside thee: neither is
" there any rock like our God." 1 Sam. ii. 2.

Hear also the words of David, "JEHOVAH is
" righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his
" works." Psal. cxlv. 17.

The Scriptures abound with such kind of expressions, I only quote a few, just to shew the similarity between the language of Nebuchadnezzar after he was humbled, and the sacred writings in general: which is a striking proof that he was instructed and assisted by the same spirit that dictated to the holy Prophets.

He closed his declaration with a noble testimony of what he had learned by experience of the power of God. AND THOSE THAT WALK IN PRIDE HE IS ABLE TO ABASE. He himself had long walked in the height of pride and haughtiness, yet God had abased him; and therefore he sets himself forth as a striking instance of what the great King of Heaven could do: and as a warning and example to all that should come after, not to walk in pride, and to
assure

assure them that if they did, they should be humbled and brought down. Nothing can be more evident from Scripture than that God is able to abase the proud; and that he will bring down the haughtiness of all creatures. "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and JEHOVAH alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of JEHOVAH shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up: and he shall be brought low." *Isai. ii. 11, 12.*

God hath said, "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, &c." *Chap. xlv. 23.*

All must be brought to yield, and submit to God, and all proud ones shall be abased before him; and their being brought low is absolutely necessary in order to their re-exaltation.

I shall here take the liberty of quoting from the Author of the Travels of Cyrus, his account of Nebuchadnezzar's restoration.

"Now was the time fixed by the prophets for the deliverance of Nebuchadnezzar: his frenzy ceased, and his reason was restored to him. Before he returned to his capital, he resolved to pay a public homage to the God of Israel, in the same place where he had given the notorious instance of his impiety.

VOL. IV.

T

He

“ He ordered Daniel to assemble the Princes,
“ Magistrates, Governors of provinces, and all the
“ Nobles of Babylon, and to conduct them to the
“ plains of Dura, where he had some years before
“ erected the golden statue.

“ Clothed with his imperial robe he mounts upon
“ an eminence from whence he may be seen by all
“ the people. He has no longer any thing fierce
“ or savage in his look. Notwithstanding the
“ dreadful condition to which his sufferings had re-
“ duced him, his countenance has a serene and
“ majestic air. He turns towards the east, takes
“ off his diadem, prostrates himself with his face to
“ the earth, and pronounces three times the tre-
“ mendous name of JEHOVAH!

“ After having adored the ETERNAL sometime
“ in profound silence, he rises, and says; People of
“ all nations assembled together. It was here that
“ you formerly beheld the extravagant marks of
“ my impious and abominable pride. It was here
“ that I usurped the rights of the Divinity, and
“ would force you to worship the work of men’s
“ hands. The Most High to punish this excess
“ of irreligion, condemned me to eat grass with the
“ beasts for seven whole years. The times are
“ accomplished. I have lifted up mine eyes to hea-
“ ven and acknowledged his power. My reason
“ and mine understanding are restored me. Your
“ God (continued he turning towards Daniel,) is
“ in

" in truth the GOD OF GODS, AND KING OF KINGS.
 " All the inhabitants of the earth are, before him, as
 " nothing, and he does according to his will both
 " in heaven and in earth. His wisdom is equal to
 " his power, and all his ways are full of justice.
 " Those that walk in pride, he is able to abase, and
 " he raises again those whom he had humbled. O
 " princes and people learn to render homage to his
 " greatness!" " At these words the whole assembly
 " sent up shouts of joy; and filled the air with ac-
 " clamations in honour of the God of Israel. Ne-
 " buchadnezzar was conducted back with pomp to
 " his capital, and resumed the government of his
 " kingdom. Soon after, he raised Daniel to the
 " highest dignity, and the Jews were honoured
 " with the first posts throughout his vast empire."
 Travels of Cyrus, Book viii.

It must certainly have been a glorious and joyful
 sight to behold the King of Babylon recovered, re-
 claimed, and restored; but if ever the Prince of Fallen
 Angels, with all his numerous hosts, shall in like
 manner submit to God, acknowledge their Creator,
 and praise, honour and extol the King of Heaven,
 confessing all his works to be truth, and his ways to
 be judgment, and that those who walk in pride he
 is able to abase; it will be the most astonishing event
 that ever did or can happen. And let it be con-
 sidered, that the grander this event would be, the
 more certainly it is worthy of God, and the more joy
 it must give to the universe at large. And there-

fore this consideration, so far from being a great objection, as most make it, is rather an argument in favour of this grandest of all ideas, that finally our Saviour's greatest enemy shall freely submit to him, and praise his glorious name. If it has been proved that Nebuchadnezzar was a type of the arch enemy of God, in his *pride, cruelty, rebellion, &c.* why not in his humiliation, and re-exaltion?

But before I come particularly to treat on this deep question, and very sublime subject, it will be necessary just to review the ground which we have have gone over, and prove that Nebuchadnezzar's change was a real conversion to God, and that the marks of the same were evident and undeniable.

Does conversion to God imply a deep and heart affecting sense of sin, and the dreadful evil of transgression? This Nebuchadnezzar seems to have had.

Is the true convert willing to acknowledge his sins and follies, and take shame to himself? This the King of Babylon certainly did in the most open, general and publick manner possible, as has been made evident,

Does true conversion imply an acquaintance with the infinitely amiable character of the Deity? That Nebuchadnezzar had this knowledge of God is plain, for he speaks of the divine perfections in the most glorious manner, which language he could not have learned except he had been taught it of God.

Are

Are humility, and the deepest self abasement, certain marks of a work of grace on the heart? It appears that Nebuchadnezzar had these.

Is it necessary to confess and acknowledge the justice or righteousness of God in his dealings towards us, and his right of sovereignty over us, in order to obtain forgiveness and acceptance with him? This the king of Babylon did in the fullest manner.

Does true conversion imply looking up to God by faith, and having confidence in him? So did the subject of our discourse.

Does conversion to God imply that a man is come to himself, and that he begins to think, speak, and act like a rational creature? So did Nebuchadnezzar, from the time that he lifted up his eyes to heaven, when his understanding and reason returned unto him.

Does a man when he is truly converted, love, admire, and adore the glorious JEHOVAH? Does he begin to love his Creator with all his heart, and with all his soul, with all his understanding, with all his might, with all his mind, and with all his strength? This disposition appears evident in Nebuchadnezzar.

Does the true convert feel such gratitude in his heart, as leads him to bless and praise the most High, with all the noblest powers of soul and body? So did the King of Babylon.

It

Is it natural for those who are truly converted, to wish to declare the wonderful works which God hath wrought upon their souls to others?

This is certain; and it is not done out of pride and vain glory, but that God's name might be honoured, and others be induced to come and partake of the same blessings. It appears from the Scripture that this is right, and what the grace of God naturally inclines all persons to do who are partakers thereof. David says, "Come and hear, all ye that
" fear God, and I will declare what he hath done
" for my soul. I cried unto him with my mouth,
" and he was extolled with my tongue." Psalm lxvi. 16, 17.

" I waited patiently for JEHOVAH; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought
" me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry
" clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established
" my goings, and hath put a new song into my
" mouth, even praise unto our God; many shall see
" it, and fear, and shall trust in JEHOVAH." xl. 1, 2, 3.

" I will bless JEHOVAH at all times: his praise
" shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall
" make her boast in JEHOVAH; the humble shall
" hear thereof, and be glad. O magnify JEHOVAH
" with me, and let us exalt his name together." xxxiv. 1, 2, 3.

" And all men shall fear, and shall declare the
" work of God; for they shall wisely consider of
" doing." lxiv. 9.

" When

“When JEHOVAH turned again the captivity of
 “Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was
 “our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue
 “with singing: Then said they among the heathen,
 “JEHOVAH hath done great things for them. JE-
 “HOVAH hath done great things for us, whereof we
 “are glad,” cxxvi. 1, 2, 3.

A considerable part of the book of Psalms is filled up with the account of what God had done for the soul of the Psalmist: and therefore it is certainly right to tell what God hath done in us, for us, and by us.

When our blessed Saviour had cast the legion of devils out of the man who was possessed, the poor creature, who was delivered from his misery, prayed Jesus “that he might be with him. Howbeit Jesus
 “suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home
 “to thy friends, and tell them how great things
 “the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had com-
 “passion on thee. And he departed and began
 “to publish in Decapolis, how great things Jesus
 “had done for him. And all men did marvel.”
 “St. Mark v. 18, 19, 20. See also St. Luke viii.
 38, 39.

We generally find that all those whose bodies our Lord healed while he dwelt upon earth, proclaimed and published abroad the wonders he had wrought for them, for it appears they were unable to restrain the desire they felt to make him known for the good of others: and it is not only reasonable to

conclude, but it is a fact, that those who are healed by him of the dreadful diseases of their souls, feel the most ardent wishes to communicate to their fellow creatures the great things God hath done for them; out of an earnest desire for the glory of God, the honour of Jesus, the interest of his kingdom, the peace of their own minds, and the welfare of mankind.

St. Peter exhorts Christians saying, "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." 1 Pet. iii. 15.

And it is very remarkable that St. Paul, that profound scholar, that masterly reasoner, and that choice divine, when he made his defence to his own countrymen, and also before Festus and King Agrippa, he did nothing but simply relate something of his former manner of life, then the wonderful and miraculous work of grace which the Lord wrought upon his soul, then his call to the ministry, and a specimen of his doctrine; or in one word, he simply told them his *experience*, his conversion, with all the remarkable circumstances of the same. See Acts xxii. 1—22. xxvi. 1—29.

I have dwelt long on this mark of a work of grace, because mankind in general treat it with so much contempt and scorn; but Nebuchadnezzar, like David, like the man that had been possessed with devils, like

St.

St. Paul, and the holy men of old, *thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the high God had wrought toward him*; and thus he did, and by this token shewed that he was a true convert.

Does the grace of God fill the souls of men with wonder and admiration at the goodness of God, and the great things which he hath done for them? Nebuchadnezzar appears to have had this mark; for he exclaimed, *How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders!*

Does true conversion make men better and more excellent than they were before; better kings, better subjects; better masters, better servants; better parents, better children; &c? then was the king of Babylon truly converted, for he was more excellent and in every respect better than before.

Is it the very nature of true religion to inspire its possessors with *piety* towards God and *benevolence*, towards man? Does it cause them to ascribe glory to God in the highest, and teach them to proclaim peace on earth, and good will towards men? Then was the King of Babylon made a partaker of true religion; for he adored, praised, extolled, and honoured God, and breathed the highest sentiments of piety: and he also proclaimed peace to all people nations, and languages that dwelt in all the earth.

Does true conversion so alter men as to make them remarkable for virtues exactly contrary to their former predominant vices? as for instance, Does
the

the grace of God cause a man naturally *proud* to be remarkable for *humility*: a *covetous* man to be noted for benevolence and *generosity*: a *wrathful* man to be the most *meek*: an *unclean* person to be the most *chaste*: and so of all the rest? Then was this King truly converted. For whereas before, he was exceeding *proud, profane, furious, wrathful*. &c. after this great change he appears exactly the contrary, full of *humility, meekness, piety, resignation to God, and universal benevolence*.

He that was like a lion became as a lamb; so powerful was the divine operation upon him. From all these marks which appeared in this King after he was humbled, I judge that he was a real convert to the knowledge and worship of the true God.

I will now just give a short summary of his confession of faith, which considering the time in which he lived is very remarkable and particular,

“ I Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, formerly a
 “ proud haughty monarch, but now humbled and
 “ brought down, do in the presence of God declare,
 “ that I believe in the most high God, the Creator of
 “ all things, the self-existent Being, who has life in
 “ himself, and from himself, and gives existence to
 “ all beings, and who is eternal, and never shall cease
 “ to be. Who is the king of kings, and Lord of
 “ Lords; the King of Heaven, the Sovereign of the
 “ universe, who alone doeth great wonders, the wise,
 “ powerful, just, and good God: Whose wisdom
 has

“has no bound, whose power none can resist, and
“whose providence is over all his works. Whose
“kingdom is universal, and everlasting, and whose
“greatness is unfearchable. Who is truth, justice
“and goodness united, and who is able to abase the
“proud, and exalt the humble.”

Or if you would rather have it in the identical words of Scripture, take it as follows.

“Of a truth, God is a God of Gods, and a Lord
“of Lords, and a revealer of secrets. There is no
“other God that can deliver after this sort. How
“great are his signs! and how mighty are his won-
“ders! his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and
“his dominion is from generation to generation.
“The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men,
“and giveth it to whomsoever he will. The Most
“High liveth for ever; whose dominion is an
“everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from ge-
“neration to generation. And all the inhabitants
“of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth
“according to his will in the army of heaven, and
“among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can
“stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? I
“praise and extol, and honour the king of Heaven,
“all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment:
“and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.”

Dan. ii. 47. iii. 29. iv. 3, 32, 34, 35, 37.

I need not here repeat the remarks which I have
already made upon every article of this excellent
confession

confession of the King's faith, or what he believed concerning God. I have shewed in this Lecture that his belief was essentially the same as that of the holy Prophets, and is in almost the same words. His faith was fully equal to the description which St. Paul gives of that faith which renders a man acceptable and well pleasing to God.

“Without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Heb. xi. 6,

True faith, with its genuine effects in all ages, is this, heartily to receive whatever truth God has been pleased to reveal, be it little or much; firmly to believe that he will fulfil all his promises; and in consequence to confide in him, love him, and constantly to obey his commandments. Whosoever has this faith, and continues therein, shall undoubtedly be saved.

I have now gone through the History of Nebuchadnezzar, as I proposed; what remains is to draw some consequences, and make a few remarks which I have promised upon this subject.

And I trust you will all agree with me, that nothing, which he pleases to do, can be impossible to him who wrought such a glorious change in and upon that haughty tyrant, who has been the subject of this, and the two preceding Lectures.

You

You may remember that one of the maxims that I gave you in the preparatory discourse was, that with God nothing that he pleases to do is impossible. The Lord said to Abraham, "Is any thing too hard for JEHOVAH?" Gen. xviii. 14. And to Jeremiah, "Behold, I am JEHOVAH, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?" Jer. xxxii. 27. And the Angel Gabriel said to Mary, "For with God, nothing shall be impossible." St. Luke, i. 37. And our dear Redeemer in a certain case said, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." St. Matt. xix. 26. or as St. Mark expresses it, "With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible." St. Mark, x. 27. or according to St. Luke, "The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God." St. Luke, xviii. 27. Keep this always in mind when you hear wonderful things foretold; if God has promised, he can and will perform; for, "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" Numb. xxiii. 19. "And also the strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent." 1 Sam. xv. 29.

We see by the wonderful works of God in general, that he is able to do great things; and by the extraordinary

ordinary instance that we have been considering, the conversion of Nebuchadnezzar, we may conclude that he is able to subdue and reclaim all his disobedient creatures, not excepting the fallen angels themselves, and their rebellious leader; of whom this King of Babylon was such a lively type and figure. I come therefore to take up this great and weighty question, Have we not reason to believe that the same God who humbled, subdued, reclaimed and restored Nebuchadnezzar, will finally bring his most stubborn enemies, the haughty monarchs of the earth, and the fallen angels, with their proud leader, to humble themselves before him, and submit to his will; and at last to love and praise Him their great Creator, and Restorer?

In the close of the last Lecture I promised to take up this important question, and throw what light I could upon it, both from reason and revelation.

With regard to the haughty monarchs of the earth, the Scripture seems to have fairly determined this matter, Psal. cxxxviii. 4, 5. "All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O JEHOVAH, when they hear the words of thy mouth. Yea, they shall sing in the ways of JEHOVAH; for great is the glory of JEHOVAH."

I will give you what the ingenious Mr. Purves says upon this passage.

"As the destruction of kings implies the destruction of their adherents; so their deliverance and happiness

“happiness may include the deliverance and happiness of all who suffered with them, in consequence of their being members of the several bodies of which the kings have been heads.

“*All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O JEHOVAH, when they shall hear the words of thy mouth.* It will I think be allowed by all Christians, that all kings have not done this as yet; for instead of praising JEHOVAH, and hearing his word, their general character has been, that they have combined against JEHOVAH, and his anointed. Now when is it that all the kings of the earth shall hear the words of JEHOVAH, and praise him? they surely have not all done it in this world; and therefore if these words be true, they must do it in some after dispensation.” Purves’s Humble Attempt, page 206, 207, second edition.

I need add nothing to what this author has observed, especially, as I have before endeavoured to prove the final restoration of all mankind, without exception, which includes all kings, as well as all their subjects.

As for the restoration of *Fallen Angels*, though it is generally known to be naturally implied in the system that I believe, yet I have never in any of my works before, treated professedly upon the subject. And in this case we must chiefly argue from the general principles of reason and revelation, for there is no single passage of Scripture that says in so many plain words,

words, *All fallen angels with their leader shall be subdued, humbled, and at last restored to the love and favour of their God.*

But if there is nothing in the Scriptures absolutely contrary to this idea, and if, as far as we are able to judge, it is infinitely worthy of God to subdue and reclaim them, and will be for his highest glory, and the greatest good of the universe, and the same may fairly be drawn from principles of reason and revelation, may be supported by texts of holy writ, and is necessarily implied in the glorious plan of redemption and reconciliation that has been held out to you in these Lectures; I shall by no means be ashamed to own it, however unpopular such a sentiment may seem.

Many have attempted to get me if possible to deny the future recovery of Fallen Angels, thinking that if I could once be brought to deny their Restoration, it would be difficult for me to maintain the final recovery of those miserable spirits who once dwelt in flesh, but having departed with all their sins upon them, are become like devils both in nature, state and punishment. But I am rather inclined to argue the other way, that as I have proved that the most wicked and miserable of the human race, shall be finally restored, after having suffered till they are subdued: so shall the Fallen Angels themselves share at last in the Restoration, with those unhappy children of men who shall have their part with them
in

In the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death, and thus be partakers of the punishment prepared for the devil and his angels.

There is no rational argument that can be used in favour of the restoration of lost souls out of hell, but what naturally leads us to conclude in favour of the restoration of fallen angels also. And since it seems plain from what has been advanced in these Lectures that all mankind without exception shall be finally restored, why not all angels likewise?

When I have been sometimes sneeringly asked, *Do you believe that the devils will be saved, or restored?* I have taken off the edge of the sneer by asking, *Do you believe that those beings were created by God pure, holy and happy spirits? That they were objects of his love and delight in their first estate? and that God is unchangeable?*

God is love, and loves all things that he hath made, and cannot hate the works of his hands as such. And if he deals with these his creatures according to the general rules by which he conducts himself towards the works of his hands, then we may safely argue that he punishes them, not for the sake of punishing, but to subdue, humble, and reclaim them.

These unhappy beings are the creatures of his power, God is their Creator and upholder; and in these respects at least, is their Father; and though they are very rebellious and disobedient children,

yet he is their Father nevertheless, and therefore most probably punishes to subdue and humble them. We are almost obliged by the native ideas which we have of a wise, powerful, and good God, to believe that he can have no other design in punishing his creatures, because no other that we can conceive appears worthy of him.

It is generally allowed that the grace of God triumphing over sin and rebellion is one of the most noble views that can be conceived; and the greater the depravity of the sinner, the more powerful and glorious must be the grace that overcomes the complicated evil. Then what a glorious triumph must the grace of God obtain if ever the fallen angels shall be subdued and reclaimed?

If our Saviour shall ever behold his greatest enemy humbled before him, confessing the justness of his punishment, willingly submitting to him, and begging for mercy at his hands, it will be the grandest and most triumphant scene that ever was beheld in the universe. And we should therefore be careful not too peremptorily to contradict *that* which if it takes place, will be the highest possible triumph to our dear Redeemer; and especially as there is no text of scripture that absolutely assures us that such an event will never take place: but on the contrary, there are several passages from which I draw the contrary conclusion.

And

And I heartily join with the pious Dr. Watts, that
 “ If the blessed God should at any time, in a con-
 “ sistence with his glorious and incomprehensible
 “ perfections, release those wretched creatures from
 “ their acute pains and long imprisonment in hell,
 “ I think I ought chearfully and joyfully to accept
 “ this appointment of God, for the good of mil-
 “ lions of my fellow creaures, and add my joys and
 “ praises to all the *songs and triumphs* of the heavenly
 “ world in the day of such a divine and glorious
 “ release of these prisoners.”

“ The ways indeed of the great God and his
 “ thoughts are above our thoughts and our ways,
 “ as the heavens are above the earth; yet I must rest
 “ and acquiesce where our Lord Jesus Christ, the
 “ Father’s chief minister, both of his wrath and of
 “ his love, has left me in the divine revelations of
 “ Scripture; and I am constrained therefore to leave
 “ these unhappy creatures under the chains of
 “ everlasting darkness, into which they have cast
 “ themselves by their wilful iniquities, till the blest-
 “ ed God shall see fit to release them.

“ This would be indeed such a new, such an
 “ astonishing and universal Jubilee, both for devils
 “ and wicked men, as must fill Heaven, Earth and
 “ Hell with hallelujahs and joy.”—*Preface to*
the second volume of The World to Come.

Now if this event would cause such hallelujahs
 and joy throughout the universe as nothing else can,

why may we not expect that it will finally take place? especially since the sacred Scriptures encourage us to hope for it; as I trust will appear from the passages that shall be produced.

I shall take the liberty of transcribing a few pages out of the very first book that ever gave me the most distant hint of the glorious system that I now hold forth. It was written in the German language, about ninety years ago, by one PAUL SIEGVOLK, and was translated into English, and printed in Pennsylvania in America in the year 1753, and is called,

The everlasting Gospel commanded to be preached by Jesus Christ, Judge of the living and dead, unto all creatures, St. Mark xvi. 16, concerning the eternal redemption found out by him: Whereby Devil, Sin, Hell and Death shall at last be abolished, and the whole creation restored to its primitive purity.

This excellent work has never yet been printed in this country, but several who have read it greatly admire its contents, and have earnestly desired the republication of the same; which if sufficient encouragement is given, will be shortly complied with. In the mean time I will give you this specimen, partly because it is full to my purpose, and partly to make my readers a little acquainted with this valuable work, and also to shew that this hypothesis is not an invention of my own brain, but has been held and maintained by others long before I was born; though it is not for its antiquity that I believe it,
but

but because of the support given it by the Scriptures.

‘ *Plain texts of Scripture, treating of the final restoration of all corrupt creatures, and consequently not only of men, but likewise of the fallen angels, (aiming at least plainly at the latter) who in the beginning were of the number of the principal creatures of God.*

‘ Psal. cxlv. 9. “ *Jehovah is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.*”

‘ Wisd. xi. 23, 24, 25, 26. xii. 1. “ *But thou hast mercy upon all; for thou canst do all things, and winkest at the sins of men, because they should amend. For thou lovest all the things that are, and abhorrest nothing which thou hast made: for never wouldest thou have made any thing, if thou hadst hated it. And how could any thing have endured, if it had not been thy will? or been preserved, if not called by thee? But thou sparest all, for they are thine, O Lord, thou lover of souls. For thine incorruptible spirit is in all things.*”

Rev. iv. 11. “ *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created.*”

‘ In these passages we are plainly told, that the mercy of God, or his tender love, does not only extend itself to men, but universally towards all creatures, that through the will of God have their being, and stand in need of mercy; and consequently also towards the fallen angels, as far as

‘ they are creatures of God ; which tender love of
 ‘ God must necessarily at last effect or bring about
 ‘ the restoration of all corrupt creatures, for it is
 ‘ not a weak or faint, but an almighty love.’

Rom. xi. 36. “ Out of him, (God) and through
 “ him, and into him, are all things: to him be glory
 “ for ever. Amen.” Thus this important text may
 “ be very well rendered. Now if *all things* (to which
 “ indisputably belong as well all fallen angels as cor-
 “ rupt men) that are come forth out of GOD, who
 “ is love essentially, or out of his everlasting creating
 “ power, and are upheld by him, shall return into
 “ the same God of love, or be pervaded and quite
 “ swallowed up by his loving spirit, what, then, will
 “ become of sin, which separates God and the crea-
 “ ture, and the unhappiness hanging together with
 “ it? Will it not of necessity by this returning or
 “ reflux of the creatures into God (however without
 “ destroying the true difference between the being
 “ of the Creator and that of the creatures) be lost
 “ and entirely abolished?”

Col. i. 16—20. “ For by him (Jesus Christ, the
 “ only begotten Son of God) were all things creat-
 “ ed that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible,
 “ and invisible, whether they be thrones, or domi-
 “ nions, or principalities, or powers: all things were
 “ created by him, and for him. And he is before
 “ all things, and by him all things consist. And he
 “ is the head of the body, the church: who is the
 beginning,

“ beginning, the first born from the dead; that in
 “ all things he might have the pre-eminence. For
 “ it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness
 “ dwell. And (having made peace through the
 “ blood of his cross) by him to reconcile all things
 “ unto himself, by him I say, whether they be things
 “ in earth, or things in heaven.”

‘ This passage teaches us the extent of the recon-
 ‘ ciliation made by Christ, namely, that it extends
 ‘ itself over the whole creation. Therefore the fallen
 ‘ angels must also necessarily have their share in it,
 ‘ for they do incontestibly belong to the *invisible*
 ‘ *things* created by Christ, and consequently to *all*
 ‘ *things*, or the *things in heaven* reconciled by him.
 ‘ And though it is true that this reconciliation chiefly
 ‘ concerns corrupt men and angels, that through sin
 ‘ are separated from God, nevertheless, all the rest of
 ‘ the creatures partake of and are benefited by it: It
 ‘ affords, for instance, matter of much joy to the
 ‘ holy angels, when, by virtue of this reconciliation,
 ‘ the apostatized creatures are converted to God,
 ‘ and thereby anew received into the communion and
 ‘ friendship of these holy spirits, (St. Luke xv. 10,
 ‘ 1 Pet. i. 12. Heb. xii. 22.) It will also be by the
 ‘ energy of this reconciliation that in time to come
 ‘ the curse which through sin was brought upon
 ‘ the creation, and has mixed itself with it, (Gen.
 ‘ iii. 17. Rom. viii. 20, 21, 22.) will be entirely
 ‘ removed from all the rest of the creatures.’

Ephes. i. 8, 9, 10. "He (*God*) hath abounded
 " towards us in all wisdom and prudence, having
 " made known unto us the mystery of his will, ac-
 " cording to his good pleasure, which he hath pur-
 " posed in himself: That in the dispensation of the
 " fulness of times, he might gather together (or re-
 " head) all things in Christ, both which are in hea-
 " ven, (or in the heavens) and which are on earth,
 " even in him."

' This is another plain testimony of the blessed
 ' restoration of all rebellious creatures (that were
 ' corrupted through sin) under Christ their true and
 ' lawful head; and by the *things in heaven*, which
 ' are to be gathered together in Christ, or subdued
 ' again under him, as their Chief, no other creatures
 ' than the fallen angels can be meant, who also in
 ' several other places in the holy Scriptures are ex-
 ' pressly reckoned amongst the *things in the hea-*
 ' *vens*, (Rev. xii. 7. Ephes. vi. 12, ii. 2.) since they
 ' were not only formerly celestial creatures, but have
 ' even to this day their seat in a certain part of the
 ' heavens, viz. in the air; which place they will not
 ' lose till just before the blessed millenium, when
 ' they will be thrown down from heaven to the
 ' earth, from thence into the bottomless pit, and
 ' finally into the fiery lake. See Rev. xii. 7, 8,
 ' 9. compared with Ephes. ii. 2. Rev. xx. 3, 10.

Heb. ii. 8. "Thou hast put all things under his
 " feet: For in that he put all in subjection under
 " him,

“ him, he left nothing that is not put under him.
 “ But now we see not yet all things put under him.”

1 Cor. xv. 24—28. “ Then cometh the end,
 “ when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to
 “ God, even the Father; when he shall have put
 “ down all rule, and all authority, and power. For
 “ he must reign till he hath put all enemies under
 “ his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed
 “ is Death. For he hath put all things under his
 “ feet: but when he saith, All things are put
 “ under him, it is manifest that he is excepted who
 “ did put all things under him. And when all
 “ things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the
 “ Son also himself be subject unto him that put
 “ all things under him, that God may be all in all.”

‘ Here we have two more unexceptionable evi-
 ‘ dences, that *all things* that were created by Christ,
 ‘ shall be made subject unto him, and indeed so sub-
 ‘ ject, that all things will be put under him in that
 ‘ true order in which God in the beginning created
 ‘ them: for this is the import of the original word
 ‘ *upetaxen*.

‘ But that is by no means the true order of the
 ‘ creatures to live in sin, which is altogether *ataxia*,
 ‘ or disorder, and consequently to lie under the
 ‘ wrath of God, and in the fiery lake, or second
 ‘ death. In short, it is to be such a subjection,
 ‘ wherewith *death* (as is expressly added) that is,
 ‘ all that may be called by that name, and therefore
 ‘ not

' not only the *first*, but in particular the *second death*,
 ' or *fiery lake*, and consequently sin as the sting of
 ' death (1 Cor. xv. 54, 55, 56.) will be entirely
 ' *abolished*, destroyed, and swallowed up in victory;
 ' such a subjection as will be that of Christ's huma-
 ' nity, with his saints under God; yea, such a sub-
 ' jection, according to which, God, who is to be
 ' *all in all things*, may be *all* too in those creatures
 ' that before had been enemies of Christ, and had
 ' been lying in the fiery lake; because the expression
 ' of *God's being all in all in the creatures*, necessarily
 ' implies a state of perfect happiness, and shews
 ' that the whole mass of the creatures being made
 ' subject unto God and Christ, will be thus pervaded
 ' by God's spirit, and, as one might say in a sort
 ' *deified*, (or made partakers of the divine nature.)
 ' God with them, and they with God, in a manner
 ' will be but *one Spirit*, as the holy scripture ex-
 ' pressly saith of such as *are joined unto the Lord*, or
 ' are subject unto him in truth. 1 Cor. vi. 17,
 ' compared with St. John, xvii. 21, 22, 23. 1 John
 ' iv. 16. But this is impossible to be so long as the
 ' creatures remain in sin and death; for then they
 ' are forsaken of God, and separated from him,
 ' which will be the highest degree of punishment in
 ' hell. Now if it is true that all creatures, and
 ' consequently also the enemies of Christ that are
 ' cast into the fiery lake, will be brought into that
 ' state of subjection just now described, wherein God
 ' will

will be *all in all*; then it must also be true that sin and all pain following it, which is found in the creatures, and of course the fiery lake too, must at last be altogether annihilated, because, without such an annihilation God cannot be all in all. If any one would object here, that the present forced *subjection* of the devils under Christ and his people, mentioned in St. Luke, x. 17, 20. is likewise expressed by the word *upotasseta*, or to be subordinate; and that from hence appears, that, according to the Holy Spirit's judgment, this is the right subjection of evil spirits and damned men, and that consequently there is no occasion to interpret the places mentioned Heb. ii. 8. 1 Cor. xv. 24—28. of a different sort of subjection of the damned: To this I answer, That we must make a distinction between the *commenced* and the *accomplished* or perfect subjection of the apostatized creatures. It is indeed in some measure already the right subjection or subordination of evil spirits and men, when they are in such a manner overcome by the power of the spirit of Christ and his believers, that they are obliged to begin outwardly to bow under them, and to shew them a forced obedience. But it is false that this should be that *perfect* subjection which God requires of his creatures, (among which even the fallen angels are indisputably to be reckoned) since it is only a *commenced* subjection, and will make way for that finally *perfect* and *accomplished*

‘ *complished* subordination, which according to our
 ‘ Saviour’s own words, is this, when the creatures
 ‘ *worship God in spirit and in truth*, and so are not
 ‘ subject unto him in a forced and affected manner,
 ‘ but willingly and gladly: For such and no other
 ‘ worshippers and subjects God seeketh. St. John
 ‘ iv. 23, 24. compared with St. Matt. iv. 10. It is
 ‘ evident that St. Luke x. 17, 20. speaks only of a
 ‘ commenced subjection, which makes that which
 ‘ is evil begin to bow a little under that which is
 ‘ good, though at the same time the evil in itself
 ‘ continues to be evil; whereas, Heb. ii. 8. and par-
 ‘ ticularly 1 Cor. xv. 24—28. speaks not only of a
 ‘ merely begun, but *consummate* subjection or subordi-
 ‘ nation of all creatures, and therefore also of the
 ‘ fallen angels and damned men, as I have shewn
 ‘ above from the import of the phrase of *God’s being*
 ‘ *all in all* in the creatures.’

Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11. “ God also hath highly ex-
 “ alted him, (Christ) and given him a name which
 “ is above every name; That at (or in) the name of
 “ Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven,
 “ and things in earth, and (N. B.) things under the
 “ earth: And that every tongue should confess that Jesus
 “ Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father.”

Rev. v. 13. “ And every creature which is in
 “ heaven, and on the earth, and (N. B.) under the
 “ earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in
 “ them, heard I, saying, Blessing, and Honour, and
 “ Glory

“ Glory and Power, be unto him that sitteth upon
 “ the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and
 “ ever.”

Psalms cxlv. 10. “ All thy works shall praise thee,
 “ O JEHOVAH, and thy saints shall bless thee.”

Psalms cl. 6. “ Let every thing that hath breath
 “ praise JAH;” (*or properly*, “ Every thing that hath
 “ breath shall praise JAH.”) Hallelujah.

‘ These sentences again afford us a fine explana-
 ‘ tion of the before described general subjection of
 ‘ all creatures, according to which every creature,
 ‘ or work of God, and consequently also Lucifer
 ‘ with his angels, shall acknowledge Christ for their
 ‘ Lord, and bless God, and praise him, which can-
 ‘ not be as long as the creatures are in a state of
 ‘ condemnation, wicked, and enemies of God.”

1 John iii. 8. “ For this purpose the Son of God
 “ was manifested, that he might destroy the works
 “ of the devil.”

‘ Whatsoever, therefore, is a work of the devil,
 ‘ and belongs to the serpent’s head, or to that govern-
 ‘ ment established by him through self will, in op-
 ‘ position to the kingdom of God, must be destroyed
 ‘ by the Son of God: for that is his office. Now
 ‘ sin in all creatures, as well in Lucifer himself and
 ‘ his angels, as in man seduced by him, is not a
 ‘ work of God, but of the devil, (and belongs to
 ‘ the hellish serpent’s head) which Lucifer by the
 ‘ turning away of his will from God, and thus be-
 ‘ coming

' coming a devil, has first brought into himself and
 ' the rest of the rebellious angels, and afterwards
 ' also into man : Therefore must Christ at last annihi-
 ' late and utterly destroy sin, together with death,
 ' and all unhappiness as its reward, in all crea-
 ' tures, as well apostate angels as fallen men. For
 ' if he was not to do this in *all* fallen creatures, he
 ' would not destroy *all* the works of the devil, but
 ' leave many satanical works undestroyed, and conse-
 ' quently he would not compleatly execute his office;
 ' but be it far from us to think thus of him. For
 ' Christ must, as was said before, *bruise the serpent's*
 ' *head*, Gen. iii. 15. and in an unlimited manner
 ' *abolish* or undo sin, for which purpose he made a
 ' sacrifice of himself, according to Heb. ix. 26.
 ' After which bruising of the serpent's head, and
 ' abolishing of sin, no other but altogether holy an-
 ' gels and righteous men will remain, in whom *God*
 ' *may be all in all.*'

Rev. xxi. 5. " And he that sat upon the throne;
 " said, Behold, I make all things new. And he
 " said unto me, Write; for these words are true and
 " faithful."

' This promise is adapted to what we read, Gen.
 ' i. 31. and shews again that we have no right to ex-
 ' clude one individual creature of all those that are
 ' fallen into sin and lie under the curse, from the
 ' renovation and final restoration, because the pro-
 ' mise absolutely declares that *all things shall be made*
 ' *new.*'

St. Mark

St. Mark xvi. 15. "And he (Jesus) said unto them, (his Disciples) Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

' That is, Go ye forth into all the world; and proclaim, wherever ye go, the glad tidings that such a Saviour is come, who both can, and really will in that order of repentance and faith appointed by God for that purpose, take away all sin, and all wretchedness hanging together with it, from all creatures labouring under the same. And that the Apostles preached no other Gospel but this, which concerneth all creatures, St. Paul declares in plain terms, Col. i. 23. "If ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached (or, is preaching) to every creature which is under heaven."

' Now by what has been said, let all pious christians, nay, all reasonable men in the world, judge who they are that in the plainest and simplest manner, without false glosses of blind and carnal reasoning, understand the above cited clear testimonies; whether those who hope from them for a General Restoration of all things; or those who in a rash manner exclude from the pitying-love of God, the universal reconciliation of Christ, and the final renovation, (which in the said texts are extended in an unlimited manner, over God's whole creation,) many thousands of millions of rational creatures?

' Of

‘ Of all the places brought from the holy Scrip-
 ‘ tures against the restoration of fallen angels; that
 ‘ which we find in Heb. ii. 16. is reckoned none
 ‘ of the least considerable, which in the common
 ‘ English translation runs thus,’ “ For verily he
 “ (Christ) took not on him *the nature of* angels; but
 “ he took on him the seed of Abraham.” ‘ From
 ‘ which words the inference is drawn, that since
 ‘ Christ has not taken on him the nature of angels,
 ‘ he consequently cannot have redeemed and recon-
 ‘ ciled those of them that did not keep their princi-
 ‘ palities, but rebelled against their Maker, incurring
 ‘ thereby his indignation; and that therefore, they
 ‘ being not redeemed nor reconciled by Christ, can
 ‘ never be restored by him. But let me have never
 ‘ so much regard for the translators of the Bible, yet
 ‘ I must own that the rendering of these words in
 ‘ the aforesaid manner, does not at all express the
 ‘ meaning of the original; which better agrees with
 ‘ the following marginal reading of most large Bibles,
 “ For verily, he (Christ) taketh not hold of angels,
 “ but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold.”

‘ Now, Christ’s *not taking hold of angels*, does no
 ‘ more signify *his not taking the nature of angels on him*,
 ‘ than *his taking hold of the seed of Abraham* signifies
 ‘ *his taking human nature upon him*. But when it is
 ‘ said of Christ in this place, that *he taketh hold of*
 ‘ *the seed of Abraham*, it naturally means, that he
 ‘ chuseth, appropriateth unto himself, and regardeth

' as his own and his peculiar people, the spiritual
 ' seed of Abraham, (Gal. iii. 29.) that is, all believ-
 ' ers from among the Jews and Gentiles, and that
 ' he taketh hold of them as something extraordinary
 ' and very precious; that he does not only hold
 ' them fast himself, but has also recommended them
 ' to the particular care of his heavenly Father, out
 ' of whose hands none is able to pluck them, St.
 ' John x. 29. Yea, that he taketh hold of them by
 ' receiving them into his most intimate communion
 ' and fellowship, even his spiritual consanguinity,
 ' and *taking them for his brethren*, according to the
 ' foregoing eleventh, and twelfth verses, and follow-
 ' ing seventeenth verse; in making them joint heirs
 ' with him, partakers of his glory, kings and priests
 ' in the world or age to come, which God hath not
 ' put in subjection unto angels, as we read ver 5. but
 ' unto his Son, and his first born brethren, who
 ' are also called *God's elect, the bride of Christ*. In
 ' short, *Christ's taking hold of the seed of Abraham*,
 ' proves the prerogative of the faithful above all
 ' creatures both in heaven and in earth.

' And what is further the purport of the words,
 ' *He taketh not hold of angels?* This we may easily
 ' conceive from what has been said. It is not, as I
 ' have already observed, that Christ *did not take upon*
 ' *him an angelical nature*; but it means briefly, that
 ' Christ has not chosen the angels for such high de-
 ' grees of glory as those who among men believe

‘in him; that they are not of Christ’s brethren,
 ‘nor are to have a share in the government and
 ‘priesthood of the world to come, being only
 ‘ministers for the heirs of salvation.’

‘Another very strong argument, that this is the
 ‘most natural and unconstrained sense of the above
 ‘cited text of Scripture, is, because we do not find
 ‘so much as one place in the whole Bible, where by
 ‘the *seed of Abraham* is understood the *human nature*,
 ‘or *whole race of men* in general: And why should
 ‘angels here intend *the nature of the angels* considered
 ‘in itself?

‘What has been said, I think, is sufficient to shew
 ‘evidently, that it is not possible that from the text
 ‘in question, there can be the least objection raised
 ‘against the fallen angels being at last restored by
 ‘Christ: And I am of opinion, that on the contrary,
 ‘there is rather hid in it a proof for their final resto-
 ‘ration. For to that exceeding great and more
 ‘than angelical glory of Christ’s elect in the next
 ‘world, or age, belongs indisputably too, that *they*
 ‘*shall judge angels*, 1 Cor. vi. 3. Which words di-
 ‘vines commonly understand of the judgments and
 ‘punishments unto which the elect will help to con-
 ‘demn the evil spirits, and which is the true sense of
 ‘that place, but whether it be the entire sense of
 ‘it, is another question. Now the aim of all punish-
 ‘ments in the world or age to come, unto which
 ‘Christ and his bride will sentence all creatures that
 ‘have

‘ have rebelled against him, is this, that they may
 ‘ humble themselves before him, and thus be put
 ‘ in a condition, that at last through the power of
 ‘ his blood, shed for the whole world, and conse-
 ‘ quently for all creatures in which sin is found, they
 ‘ may be cleansed therefrom, and the diabolical
 ‘ image destroyed, and so may be made subject un-
 ‘ to God in truth. Yea, as sure as God is GOD,
 ‘ that is, essentially and invariably *Love* towards all
 ‘ his creatures, and is to be such to all endless eter-
 ‘ nity, so sure it is, that all his judgments can have
 ‘ no other aim but that which was just now men-
 ‘ tioned; let people say what they will against it.’

‘ And when this scope of the divine judgment up-
 ‘ on the fallen angels (after the example of the proud,
 ‘ but afterwards humbled king of Babylon, Dan. iv.
 ‘ 31, 32, 33, 34. compared with Isai. xiv. 12.) shall
 ‘ be obtained, as certainly one day or other it must,
 ‘ according to the plain testimony of the word of
 ‘ God, which says (Phil. ii. 10, 11.) that even *all*
 ‘ *things under the earth* (viz. damned angels and men,
 ‘ as all divines understand it) *shall bow their knees be-*
 ‘ *fore Jesus Christ, and confess that he is Lord, to the*
 ‘ *glory of God the Father*: when, I say, this shall be
 ‘ accomplished, then the fallen angels will be no
 ‘ longer proud devils, but humbled spirits, and truly
 ‘ in such a condition, that God by the Son of his
 ‘ eternal love (by whom both the *visible* and *invisible*
 ‘ *things were created*, Col. i. 16.) can save them from

‘ perdition. For God’s maxim, which necessarily
 ‘ flows from his being, is once for all, that God *re-*
 ‘ *sisteth the proud* creatures only, *and giveth grace to the*
 ‘ *humble*, 1 Pet. v. 5. and indeed without respect of
 ‘ persons, Rom. ii. 11. Col. iii. 25. be they now
 ‘ called men or angels.

‘ He loves one creature as well as another; al-
 ‘ though he makes of the one a more glorious vessel
 ‘ than of the other. In this he cannot be hindered
 ‘ neither by the multitude nor heinousness of the sins
 ‘ before committed by the creatures. For, *where sin*
 ‘ *abounded, grace and love shall much more abound*, viz.
 ‘ then when the creature acknowledgeth its sin, and
 ‘ by the powerful grace of God leaves off sinning.
 ‘ In fine, that will be done, which is spoken in Rev.
 ‘ xxi. 5. God will *make all things*, that are old and
 ‘ spoiled, *new* again. “*These words are true and*
 ‘ *faithful.*” Thus far this excellent author.

I need add but little more. When this great event
 shall take place, it will be the most joyful scene that
 was ever exhibited in the universe! When our Savi-
 our’s foes shall all submit to him, and become as
 truly his subjects and friends, as they are now his
 enemies, it will be a glorious change indeed. Then
 shall God once more behold with pleasure all the
 works that he hath created and made, and pronounce
 them without exception, as at the first, **VERY GOOD.**

LECTURE XL.

The utter Ruin and Destruction of the Empire and City of Babylon, according to the express words of Prophecy, considered as typical of the certain Destruction and total Annihilation of the Kingdom of Satan, and Evil out of the Universe.

HAVING in the last Lecture finished the history of Nebuchadnezzar the Great, the powerful and most famous King of Babylon, and improved the same as typical and highly figurative of Lucifer, the grand Prince of the Fallen Angels: shall in the present discourse consider the utter ruin and destruction of the empire and city of Babylon, as typical of the final and total abolition of all evil out of the universe.

I fully believe that the glorious period will at length arrive, when all evil shall be as totally annihilated,

lated, no more to exist for ever, as is the famous city where Nebuchadnezzar dwelt, which however, great and powerful once, is now blotted from the creation, and shall never more arise.

In treating on this subject it may be proper to observe the following method.

First, to give a short description of Babylon, as it was in its glory, in the days of Nebuchadnezzar.

Secondly, select some of those numerous and very remarkable prophecies relative to its destruction, and shew how exactly they have been accomplished.

Thirdly, I shall present you with the accounts given by travellers of its utter desolation; which will be striking comments upon the prophecies of its ruin.

Fourthly, I shall endeavour to improve the subject to the purpose for which I have chosen it.

First, I shall give a short description of this famous city, with the Temple of Belus, the Palaces, Gardens, and other great works of art belonging thereto.

Taken from Mr. Stackhouse's history of the Bible.

The whole city which stood on a large flat, consisted properly of two parts, which were divided by the river Euphrates; that part of it which was on the east side of the river, was the old city; the other which was on the west side, was added by Nebuchadnezzar; and the whole was a square of fifteen miles every way, which made the whole sixty miles in circumference.

This city was walled round with a wall eighty-seven feet thick; and three hundred and fifty feet

in height; and it was built of large bricks cemented together with bitumen, a glutinous slime, which issuing out of the earth in that country, binds stronger, and firmer than lime, and in a short time grows harder than the very brick and stone which it cements.

The city was encompassed without the walls with a vast ditch, filled with water, and lined with bricks on both sides, after the manner of a counterscarp, (or ditch next to a camp) and, as the earth which was dug out of it made the bricks wherewith the walls were built, we may judge of the depth and largeness of the ditch by the vast height and thickness of the walls.

In the whole compass of the wall there were an hundred gates, *i. e.* five and twenty on each side, made of solid brass; and between every two of these gates at proper distances, were three towers, *i. e.* at each corner of the city a tower, and between each corner and the next gate on either side three towers, and so three between each gate, except those parts of the walls which were unapproachable by reason of morasses or boggy fens always full of water; and all these towers were ten feet higher than the walls.

Answering to every one of these gates, there was a street which led from gate to gate, so that there were fifty in all, each fifteen miles long; whereof twenty-five going one way, and twenty-five another, they crossed each other at right angles, and so cut

the city into six hundred and seventy-six squares; each of which was half a mile and twenty poles on each side, which is two miles and a quarter in compass; and round these on every side towards the streets, stood the houses, all built three or four stories high, with fronts adorned with all manner of embellishments, and with yards and gardens thrown backwards.

Besides these there were four other streets built only on one side, because they had the wall on the other, which went round the four sides of the city, and were all two hundred and fifty feet broad, though the other streets were but an hundred and fifty.

Quite across the city ran a branch of the river Euphrates, which entered it on the north and went out on the south, and over it in the very middle of the city, was a bridge of a furlong in length, and thirty feet in breadth; built with wonderful art to supply the defect of a foundation in the bottom of the river, which was all sandy.

By this bridge a communication was kept up between the two parts of the city; and, at the two extremities of it stood two palaces; the old one on the east, and the new one on the west side of the river. The former of these took up four of the squares above mentioned, the other nine; and the temple of Belus which stood near the old palace, took up another.

The

The temple of Belus, which was one of the most wonderful works in the world, was a square of a furlong, or forty poles; on each side, which was half a mile in compass, and consisted of eight towers (or what seemed like towers) built one above another. Herodotus tells us, that the way to go up it was by stairs on the outside round it; from whence it seems most likely, that the whole ascent to it was by the benching in, drawn into a sloping line from the bottom to the top, eight times round it, and that this made the appearance of eight towers one above another. The eight towers (as they are called) being like so many stories, were each of them seventy five feet high, and in them were many large rooms, with arched roofs supported with pillars, which after the place was consecrated to an idolatrous use, were all made parts of the temple: but the most sacred place of all, and where the chiefest devotions were performed, was the uppermost story, over which (on the top of the tower) was an observatory, by the benefit of which the Babylonians advanced their knowledge in astronomy beyond all other nations.

This famous tower was destroyed by Xerxes.

Near to this temple on the east side of the river, stood the old palace of the kings of Babylon, four miles in circumference; and exactly over against it on the other side of the river, was the new palace, built by Nebuchadnezzar, eight miles in compass, and surrounded with three walls one within another.

But

But the most wonderful things belonging to it were the hanging gardens, which Nebuchadnezzar made in complaisance to his wife Amytis, daughter of Astyages king of Media: for she retaining a strong inclination for the mountains and forests of her own country, desired to have something like them in Babylon; and therefore to gratify her, he erected this monstrous work of vanity.

These gardens contained a space of four hundred feet square, and were carried up aloft into the air, in the manner of several large terraces, one above another, until the highest of them came up to the height of the walls of the city, that is to say, was three hundred and fifty feet high.

The ascent was from terraces to terraces by stairs ten feet wide, and the whole pile was sustained by vast arches, built upon arches, one above another, and strengthened by a wall surrounding it on every side, of two and twenty feet in thickness.

On the top of the arches were first laid large flat stones sixteen feet long, and four broad; over them was a layer of reeds mixed with a large quantity of bitumen; over this were two rows of bricks closely cemented together by plaister; over these were laid thick sheets of lead; and all this to keep the moisture of the mould from drying away; and then, lastly upon this lead was laid such a quantity of earth heaped together, as afforded depth enough for the largest trees to take root in. For, in this garden there

was

was every thing, that could either delight the eye or gratify the curiosity, beautiful, and large trees, flowers, plants, and shrubs; and to keep every thing verdant and gay, in the upper terrafs there was an aqueduct or engine, which drew up water out of the river into a kind of refervoir above, and from thence watered the whole garden.

The river indeed, at a certain feafon of the year, viz. in the months of June, July, and Auguft, by the fun's melting the fnow in the mountains of Armenia, ufed to overflow its banks, (in the fame manner as the Nile in Egypt does) to the great damage of the city and country of Babylon; and therefore to prevent this inconvenience for the future, Nebuchadnezzar had two canals cut on the eaft fide of the Euphrates, in order to carry off the fuperfluous water into the Tigris. One of thefe canals difcharged itfelf near Selucia, and the other over againft Apamia: and for the farther fecurity of the country from the head of thefe canals down to the city and fome way lower, he made vaft banks of brick and bitumen; but the moft wonderful part of the work was within the city.

There on each fide of the Euphrates he built from the very bottom of the channel, a great wall of the fame thicknefs with the walls of the city, viz. eighty-feven feet thick, and twenty miles in length, beginning the work two miles and an half above the city, and going through the city, and as much below

low with the fame: and againſt every ſtreet that croſſed the river he made in the wall a brazen gate on each ſide, and ſtairs leading down to the river, from whence the inhabitants uſed to paſs by boats from one part of the city to the other.

It was neceſſary however that while this work was carrying on, the ſtream ſhould be diverted ſome other way; and therefore to this purpoſe, he had a vaſt artificial lake made to the weſt of Babylon; which according to the loweſt computation, was forty miles ſquare, and a hundred and ſixty in compaſs, and being of a proportionable depth, was able to contain all the water till this work was finiſhed. When this was done, the water was returned to its proper channel; but the lake and the canal which led to it were ſtill preſerved, becauſe they were found ſerviceable.

It is no wonder that ſuch a city as this ſhould be called in Scripture, "Great Babylon;" Dan. iv. 20. "The glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees excellency," Ifai. xiii. 19. "The Golden city." Chap. xiv. 4. "The Lady of kingdoms;" Chap. xlvii. 5. Is ſaid to be "abundant in treaſures;" Jer. li. 13. And was called by God himſelf, "The praiſe of the whole earth!" Ver. 41.

One would hardly have imagined that ſuch a city as this would be in any danger of being entirely forſaken, and that it ſhould ever be blotted from the fair book of creation, never more to exiſt. Surely if any city in the world might boaſt of continuing

tinuing for ever, to the end of time, this might put in the first claim. And such indeed was her vain glory, "I shall be a lady for ever; I am, and none 'else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither "shall I know the loss of children;" Isai. xlvii. 7. 8. But the inspired Prophet declared that both the loss of children and widowhood should come upon her in a moment in one day, in their perfection, ver. 9.

I come now, Secondly, to select some of those numerous and very remarkable prophecies that relate to the destruction of this renowned city, and to shew their exact accomplishment.

Isaiah and Jeremiah are the only Prophets that prophesied plainly and particularly of the destruction of Babylon, yet there is so much said upon this important subject, that were I only to read the whole of what they have written, without any explanation, it would be matter sufficient for this Lecture. I shall therefore only select the most striking passages, and arrange them under different heads.

1. These Prophets predicted the taking of the city, and in the language of prophecy speak of it as a thing already done, to shew its absolute certainty.

"Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven "images of her gods he hath broken unto the "ground." Isai. xxi. 9.

"Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and "set up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say,

"Babylon

“ Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach
 “ is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded,
 „ her images are broken in pieces;” Jer. l. 2.

“ A sound of battle is in the land, and of great
 “ destruction. How is the hammer of the whole
 “ earth cut asunder and broken! How is Babylon
 “ become a desolation among the nations! I have
 “ laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken,
 “ O Babylon, and thou wast not aware; thou art
 “ found, and also caught, because thou hast striven
 “ against JEHOVAH. JEHOVAH hath opened his
 “ armoury, and hath brought forth the weapons of
 “ his indignation: for this is the work of Adonai
 “ JEHOVAH in the land of the Chaldeans.” Ver.
 22, 23, 24, 25.

“ Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl
 “ for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may
 “ be healed.” Chap. li. 8.

These prophecies are very positive, as though the thing was actually accomplished; which yet did not take place till more than an hundred and sixty years after Isaiah prophesied of it, and near sixty after Jeremiah had finished his testimony respecting the same. It is very common for the prophets to speak of things as finished, long before they actually happen, to testify the certainty of their coming to pass, as I have observed several times before.

2. The very time of the judgment of Babylon, and the destruction of that monarchy was expressly foretold

foretold by Jeremiah, Chap. xxv. 11, 12. “ And
“ this whole land (meaning the land of Judea)
“ shall be a desolation and an astonishment; and
“ these nations shall serve the king of Babylon
“ seventy years. And it shall come to pass when
“ seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish
“ the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith JEHO-
“ VAH, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chal-
“ deans; and will make it perpetual desolations.”

This prophecy was delivered in the very first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, which was just seventy years before the taking of the city by the Medes and Persians.

3. One of the most remarkable prophecies respecting the taking of Babylon, was the prediction of the very person by whom that great conquest should be made; he was called by name, more than an hundred years before he was born, and his successes are described, and his very conduct declared in the most express manner by the prophet Isaiah.

God speaks of himself, of the great things which he had done, and which he had commanded, and foretold; and introduces Cyrus by name, and describes his character and work, in the following wonderful manner.

“ That confirmeth the word of his servant, and
“ performeth the counsel of his messengers; that
“ saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited, and
‘ to the cities of Judah, Ye shalt be built, and I
will

“ will raise up the decayed places thereof. That
 “ faith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy
 “ rivers: That faith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd,
 “ and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to
 “ Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the tem-
 “ ple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

“ Thus faith JEHOVAH to his anointed, to Cyrus,
 “ whose right hand I have holden, to subdue na-
 “ tions before him, and I will loose the loins of
 “ kings; to open before him the two leaved gates,
 “ and the gates shall not be shut. I will go before
 “ thee, and make the crooked places straight: I
 “ will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut
 “ in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee
 “ the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of
 “ secret places, that thou mayest know that I
 “ JEHOVAH, who call thee by thy name, am the
 “ God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and
 “ Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy
 “ name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast
 “ not known me. I am JEHOVAH, and there is
 “ none else, there is no God besides me: I girded
 “ thee, though thou hast not known me.” Isaiah
 xlv. 26, 27, 28. xlv. 1—6.

“ I have raised him up in righteousness, and I
 “ will direct all his ways; he shall build my city,
 “ and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor
 “ reward, faith JEHOVAH of hosts; ver. 13.

“ Remember

“ Remember the former things of old ; for I am
 “ God, and there is none else ; I am God, and there
 “ is none like me : Declaring the end from the
 “ the beginning, and from ancient times the things
 “ that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall
 “ stand, and I will do all my pleasure : Calling a
 “ ravenous bird from the east, the man that exe-
 “ cuteth my counsel from a far country : yea, I have
 “ spoken it, I will also bring it to pass ; I have pur-
 “ posed it, I will also do it.” Chap. xlv. 9,
 10, 11.

“ All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear ; who
 “ among them hath declared these things ? JEHO-
 “ VAH hath loved him : he will do his pleasure on
 “ Babylon, and his arm shall be on the Chaldeans.
 “ I, even I, have spoken ; yea, I have called him :
 “ I have brought him, and he shall make his way
 “ prosperous.” Chap. xlviii. 14, 15.

These are the words of God respecting that won-
 derful conqueror who took the city of Babylon, and
 transferred the empire from the Babylonians to the
 Medes and Persians ; and how exactly they were
 fulfilled in him ! He subdued kings, took cities,
 and extended his conquests far and wide, even over
 Asia, from the river Indus to the Egean sea.

He took Sardes, Babylon, and many other cities,
 where he found vast treasures. The rich king of
 Lydia, Cræsus, whose riches were so immense as to
 become proverbial, was one of the prisoners of Cyrus.

He was the great deliverer of the Jews, as well as the destroyer of their foes; and no sooner did the kingdom of Babylon come into his hands, but he issued a proclamation to the people of God to return to Jerusalem, and to build the temple, and let them go free without price or reward.

“ Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia,
 “ that the word of JEHOVAH by the mouth of Jere-
 “ miah might be fulfilled, JEHOVAH stirred up the
 “ spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a
 “ proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and
 “ put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus
 “ king of Persia, JEHOVAH, God of heaven, hath
 “ given me all the kingdoms of the earth: and he
 “ hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusa-
 “ lem which is in Judah. Who is there among you
 “ of all his people? his God be with him, and let
 “ him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and
 “ build the house of JEHOVAH God of Israel (he
 “ is the God) which is in Jerusalem. And whoso-
 “ ever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth,
 “ let the men of his place help him with silver, and
 “ with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, be-
 “ sides the free-will offering for the house of God
 “ that is in Jerusalem.” Ezra i. 1, 2, 3, 4. See also
 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23.

4. The very nations that encamped against Babylon, and took it, are particularly spoken of by the prophets: and they are described as a multitude of fierce and warlike people.

" The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like
 " as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the
 " kingdoms of nations gathered together: JEHO-
 " VAH of hosts mustereth the Host of the battle.
 " They come from a far country, from the end of
 " heaven, &c. Isai. xiii. 4, 5. Behold, I will stir
 " up the Medes against them, (the Babylonians)
 " who shall not regard silver, and as for gold, they
 " shall not delight in it. Their bows also shall dash
 " the young men to pieces: and they shall have no
 " pity on the fruit of the womb: their eye shall
 " not spare children." Ver. 17, 18.

" Go up, O Elam; (that is Persia,) besiege, O
 " Media:" Isai. xxi. 2.

" JEHOVAH hath raised up the spirit of the kings
 " of the Medes: for his device is against Babylon
 " to destroy it; because it is the vengeance of
 " JEHOVAH, the vengeance of his temple." Jer.
 li. 11.

" Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the
 " trumpet among the nations, prepare the na-
 " tions against her, call together against her the
 " kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; ap-
 " point a captain against her; cause the horses to
 " come up as the rough caterpillars. Prepare
 " against her the nations with the kings of the
 " Medes, the captains thereof, and all the rulers
 " thereof, and all the land of his dominion." Ver.
 27, 28.

Is is well known that the army of Cyrus was composed of a great multitude of various nations, such as the Armenians, Phrygians, and other people whom he had conquered, and who attended him in the war against Babylon; besides the Medes, who are particularly mentioned so often in these prophecies.

5 The prophets foretold that the city should be taken suddenly by surprize, and during the time of a great feast.

“ I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also
“ taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware, thou
“ art found, and also caught.” Jer. l. 24.

“ In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will
“ make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and
“ sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake” faith
“ JEHOVAH.” li. 39.

“ And I will make drunk her princes, and her
“ wise men, her captains and her rulers, and her
“ mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual
“ sleep, and not wake, faith the King, whose name
“ is JEHOVAH of Hosts.” Ver. 57.

And we find from the sacred Scriptures, that it was taken at the very time of Belshazzar’s impious feast, when he “ made a great feast to a thousand of
“ his lords, and drank wine before the thousand;” when he “ commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels, which his father Nebuchadnezzar had
“ taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem;

“ that

“ that the king and his princes, his wives and his
“ concubines might drink therein.” Which was
accordingly done; and not content therewith,
they went on to add idolatry to impiety: for it is
said, “ They drank wine, and praised the gods of
“ gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and
“ of stone.”

In that same hour, while they were in the height
of merriment, impiety, debauchery and profaneness,
their sport was suddenly spoiled; for there came forth
fingers of a man's hand, which wrote upon the plaister
of the wall of the king's palace; the astonished
king beheld the awful monitor, he saw the palm of
the hand that wrote; “ Then the king's countenance
“ was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so
“ that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his
“ knees smote one against another.” Oh what un-
known terror and anxiety began to seize his guilty
conscience, when the hand of this invisible agent, the
messenger of God, appeared writing his sentence of
condemnation on the wall of the palace! The figures,
dark, mysterious, and unknown to all the courtiers,
could be read and explained by none, till the old,
the pious, and renowned Daniel was sent for; who
after delivering a most awful, and severe Lecture to
the trembling monarch, read, and interpreted the
dreadful sentence; by which it was declared, that
God had numbered the kingdom of Belshazzar, and
finished it; that he was weighed in the balances, and

found wanting; and that his kingdom was divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

At that very time the victorious army under Cyrus, were in possession of part of the city; Daniel had not long been gone, when the troops of the Medes and Persians found the way to the royal palace, surprized and slew the guards, and came rushing in where the king and his nobles were assembled, and slaughtered them immediately, for the sacred writer says, "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom." Dan. Chap. v.

This is all that the Scriptures inform us *historically* respecting this great event; but *prophetically* there is the fullest information that we could wish.

It is wonderful that prophecies delivered so long before the events, should have all the exactness and particularity of the best written history; besides the events themselves seemed very unlikely at the time they were predicted: But these things are intended to make known the divine prescience, and universal Providence of God.

It was declared that the river should be dried up before the taking of the city. This was a very unlikely circumstance; for the river was more than a quarter of a mile broad, and deeper than the height of two men standing one upon another; so that the city was thought to be better fortified by the river than by the walls. Yet the prophets plainly foretold

foretold, that the waters should be dried up. God speaks by Isaiah of the great things which he had done, and would do. "That faith to the deep, "Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers." Isai. xliv. 27.

And by Jeremiah God says, "A drought is upon "her waters, and they shall be dried up." Jer. l. 38.

"I will dry up her sea, and make her springs "dry." Chap. li. 36.

Words could hardly be more plain and positive; and though it is probable Cyrus knew nothing of these prophecies, yet he acted as though he had been directed by them. For Cyrus finding he could not prevail against the city by assailing the walls or forcing the gates; (for the Babylonians treated all attempts against the city, which they judged impregnable, with the utmost contempt :) set himself to study how he might become master of it in the easiest and most expeditious manner. And learning that the Babylonians were engaged in celebrating a great feast in honour of their God, Bel; he thought it might be a proper time to make an attack. And then, as though he had been inspired with the idea, he set his army just in the dusk of the evening, to turn the water of the river Euphrates, into that vast lake before mentioned; by which means the river became fordable before midnight. As soon as this was the case he ordered his soldiers

into the river; and they wading along the channel, found that the inhabitants in their festivity had neglected or forgotten to shut the gates; and they finding them open, entered by them into all parts of the city at their pleasure. And by these means Babylon that was otherwise impregnable, and was supplied with provisions for twenty years, was easily taken.

Had the Babylonians but known what the Persians were doing, they might have shut the gates, and stood upon the walls, and have taken and destroyed the army of Cyrus with the utmost ease. But God had said that the city should be taken, and the river dried up, and so it happened, exactly as was foretold.

But of all the prophecies respecting Babylon, none more demand our attention, or are more to our present purpose, than those which speak of the total, final, and endless destruction of this once powerful and famous city.

The prophecies of this kind are many and very striking. I will here give you a specimen of them.

“ Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of
“ the Chaldees excellency, shall be as when God
“ overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah: It shall never
“ be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from
“ generation to generation: neither shall the Ara-
“ bians pitch tent there, neither shall the shepherds
“ make their fold there: But wild beasts of the
“ desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be
full

“ full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell
 “ there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild
 “ beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate
 “ houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces,
 “ and her time is near to come, and her days
 “ shall not be prolonged.” Isaiah xiii. 19, 20,
 21, 22.

“ I will rise up against them, saith JEHOVAH of
 “ Hosts, and cut off from Babylon, the name, and
 “ remnant, and son, and nephew, (or grandson)
 “ saith JEHOVAH. I will also make it a possession
 “ for the bittern, and pools of water: and I will
 “ sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith
 “ JEHOVAH of Hosts.” Isai. xiv, 22, 23.

The prophet Jeremiah speaketh much in the same manner.

“ Because of the wrath of JEHOVAH it shall not
 “ be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate;
 “ every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonish-
 “ ed, and hiss at all her plagues. How is the
 “ hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken!
 “ how is Babylon become a desolation among the
 “ nations! Therefore the wild beasts of the desert
 “ with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell there,
 “ and the owls shall dwell therein: and it shall be
 “ no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be
 “ dwelt in from generation to generation. As God
 “ overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neigh-
 “ bouring cities thereof, saith JEHOVAH; so shall

“no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein.” Jer. l. 13, 23, 39, 40.

“O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness.

“And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations: but thou shalt be desolate for ever, saith JEHOVAH. And the land shall tremble and sorrow: for every purpose of JEHOVAH shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant. And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling place for dragons, an astonishment and an hissing, without an inhabitant. How is Sheshach taken! and how is the praise of the whole earth surprized! how is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations! The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. Her cities are a desolation, a dry land and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby.” Jer. li. 13, 26, 29, 37, 41, 42, 43.

“O JEHOVAH, thou hast spoken against this place, to cut it off, that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate for ever.” Ver. 62.

These are the remarkable prophecies of the utter destruction of Babylon, which have all been fulfilled by

by degrees, till the whole were at last accomplished; and for many ages past, Babylon has been a total desolation without an inhabitant, and so will for ever remain,

The threatnings were not all fulfilled at once, but began to be accomplished when Cyrus took the city, and continued fulfilling until it was reduced to a heap of ruins.

The seat of empire was removed from Babylon to Shushan, by the Persian monarchs, so that Babylon never recovered its ancient splendor after it was taken, but decayed by degrees, until it was brought to utter desolation.

Cyrus took precautions to prevent the Babylonians from rebelling, by disarming them, and taking down part of the walls of the city; he also imposed a tribute upon the inhabitants, distributed their best houses among his officers, appointed a strong garrison and compelled the citizens to defray the charge,

But notwithstanding all his precautions, the Babylonians rebelled against Darius, and in order that they might hold out to the last extremity, they took all their women, and each man choosing whom he liked best, they strangled all the rest, that unnecessary mouths might not consume their provisions. They sustained the siege about twenty months, and at last the city was taken by stratagem. When Darius had made himself master of the place, he ordered three thousand of the principal men to be crucified;

crucified; and reduced the walls down to about seventy-five feet in height. And by thus taking down the walls, and destroying the gates, he remarkably fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah, "Thus
 "saith JEHOVAH of hosts, The broad walls of Ba-
 "bylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates
 "shall be burnt with fire." Jer. li. 58.

Xerxes after his return from his unfortunate expedition into Greece, partly out of hatred to image worship, but chiefly to reimburse himself after his enormous expences, seized the sacred treasures, and plundered or destroyed the temples and idols of Babylon.

This fulfilled the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven
 "images of her gods he hath broken unto the
 "ground." Isai. xxi. 9.

"Bell boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols
 "were upon the beasts and upon the cattle: your
 "carriages were heavy loaden; they are a burden
 "to the weary beast. They stoop, they bow down
 "together: they could not deliver the burden, but
 "themselves are gone into captivity." Isai. xlv. 1, 2.

"Babylon is taken, Bell is confounded, Mero-
 "dach is broken in pieces, her idols are confound-
 "ed, her images are broken in pieces." Jer. l. 2.

"And I will punish Bell in Babylon, and I will
 "bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath
 "swallowed up; and the nations shall not flow to-
 gether

"gether any more unto him." Jer. li. 44.

"Therefore, behold the days come that I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon." Ver. 47.

"Wherefore behold, the days come, saith JEHOVAH, that I will do judgment upon her graven images." Ver. 52.

Babylon continued to moulder away under the Persian government, and was never able to lift up its head again. When Alexander entered the city, a great part of it was already desolated, not being a quarter inhabited. The river Euphrates, which was turned out of its course by Cyrus, had never been restored to its proper channel again, and therefore it had flooded all that side of the country, and rendered it uninhabitable. It is said indeed that Alexander intended to have made Babylon the seat of his empire, and actually set men at work to repair the banks of the river, and to bring the waters again into their former channel, and to rebuild the temple of Belus. But he met with difficulties and hindrances in the work, and death soon after put an end to that, and all the rest of his designs, and none of his successors ever attempted any thing of the kind. What a remarkable hand of Providence appeared in defeating his scheme! God had threatened Babylon with total destruction, which came upon it by degrees, till it was no more in being.

A few years after the death of Alexander, Seleucus Nicator built Selucia upon the river Tigris, and removed his court thither, which in process of time robbed Babylon of most of its inhabitants, and even of its very name, being sometimes called Babylon. So that by one misfortune after another, this great city became wholly desolate, and was converted into a chase for wild beasts, about the fourth century after Christ.

The converting this city into a chase for wild beasts to breed and feed there, was a most remarkable fulfilment of the word of the prophets, that *the wild beasts of the desert, with the wild beasts of the island should dwell there, and cry in their desolate houses. And their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and dragons shall cry in their pleasant palaces. And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing without an inhabitant*

One part of the country being overflowed by the river, (which was turned out of its course and never restored again to its channel, became boggy and marshy, so that it might literally be said to be a *possession for the bittern, and pools of water*. Another part is described as dry and naked, and barren of every thing, by which another prophecy was fulfilled which in some measure seemed to contradict the former, *Her cities are a desolation, a dry land and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby*.

Having

Having mentioned some of those numerous and very remarkable prophecies relating to the destruction of Babylon which have been so exactly accomplished as to strike all attentive minds with astonishment: I come,

Thirdly, to present you with the accounts which travellers give of its utter destruction; which are striking comments upon the prophecies that have been recited.

Benjamin of Tudela, a Jew who lived in the twelfth Century, in his Itinerary, says, "Ancient Babylon is now laid waste, but some ruins are still to be seen of Nebuchadnezzar's palace, and men fear to enter there on account of the serpents and scorpions which are in the midst of it."

Texeira, a Portuguese, in the description of his travels from India to Italy, says, speaking of this once great and famous city, "There is nothing but a few vestiges remaining, nor in the whole region is any place less frequented."

Rauwolf, a German traveller, passed that way in the year 1574, and he gives us the following account of the ruins of this once celebrated city. "The village of Elugo now lieth on the place where formerly old Babylon, the Metropolis of Chaldea, was situated. The harbour is a quarter of a league's distance from it, where people go ashore, in order to proceed by land to the celebrated city of Bagdat, which is a day and an half's journey from thence eastward

“ eastward on the Tigris. This country is so dry
 “ and barren that it cannot be tilled, and so bare,
 “ that I could never have believed that this power-
 “ ful city, once the most stately and renowned in all
 “ the world, and situated in the pleasant and fruitful
 “ country of Shinar, could have ever stood there, if
 “ I had not known it by its situation, and many an-
 “ tiquities of great beauty, which are still standing
 “ hereabout in great desolation. First, by the old
 “ bridge which was laid over the Euphrates, where-
 “ of there are some pieces and arches still remaining,
 “ built of burnt brick, and so strong that it is admi-
 “ rable.—Just before the village of Elugo is the hill
 “ whereon the castle stood, and the ruins of its forti-
 “ fications are still visible, though demolished and
 “ uninhabited. Behind it, and pretty near to it,
 “ did stand the tower of Babylon.—It is still to be
 “ seen, and is half a league in diameter; but so ruin-
 “ ous, so low, and so full of venomous creatures,
 “ which lodge in holes made by them in the rub-
 “ bish, that no one durst approach nearer to it than
 “ half a league, except during two months in win-
 “ ter, when these animals never stir out of their
 “ holes. There is one sort particularly, which the
 “ inhabitants in the language of the country, which
 “ is Persian, call Eglor, the poison whereof is very
 “ searching: they are larger than our lizards.”

A noble Roman, Petrus Vallensis, (Della Valle)
 being at Bagdat in the year 1616, went to see the
 ruins

ruins of ancient Babylon, as they are thought to be, and his account of them is thus expressed. "In the middle of a vast and level plain, about a quarter of a league from Euphrates, which in that place runs westward, appears a heap of ruined buildings, like a huge mountain, the materials of which are so confounded together, that one knows not what to make of it. Its situation and form correspond with that pyramid which Strabo calls the tower of Belus: and is in all likelihood the tower of Nimrod in Babylon, or Babel, as that place is still called. There appear no marks of ruins, without the compass of the huge mass, to convince one that so great a city as Babylon had ever stood there: all one discovers within fifty or sixty paces of it being only the remains here and there of some foundations of buildings; and the country round about it is so flat and level, that one can hardly believe it should be chosen as the situation of so great and noble a city as Babylon, or that there were ever any remarkable buildings on it: but for my part I am astonished there appears so much as there does, considering it is almost four thousand years since that city was built, and that Diodorus Siculus tells us, it was reduced almost to nothing in his time."

The celebrated traveller Tavernier says, "At the parting of the Tigris, which is but a little way from Bagdat, there is the foundation of a city,"

“ which may seem to have been a large league in
“ compass. There are some of the walls yet stand-
“ ing, upon which six coaches may go a-breast :
“ they are made of burnt brick, ten feet square, and
“ three thick. The chronicles of the country say
“ here stood the ancient Babylon.”

Mr. Hanway in his travels going to give an account of the siege of Bagdat by Nadir Shah, prefaceth it thus. “ Before we enter upon any circumstance relating to the siege of Bagdat, it may afford some light to the subject, to give a short account of this famous city, in the neighbourhood of which formerly stood the Metropolis of one of the most ancient and most potent monarchies in the world. The place is generally called Bagdat or Bagdad, though some writers preserve the ancient name of Babylon. The reason of thus confounding these two cities is, that the Tigris and Euphrates forming one common stream before they disembogue into the Persian gulph, are not unfrequently mentioned as one and the same river. It is certain that the present Bagdat is situated on the Tigris, but the ancient Babylon, according to all historians, sacred and profane, was on the Euphrates.

“ The ruins of the latter which geographical
“ writers place about fifteen leagues to the south of
“ Bagdat, are now so much effaced that there are
“ hardly any vestiges of them to point out the situation.
“ tion.

“ tion. In the time of the Emperor Theodosius,
 “ there was only a great park remaining, in which
 “ the kings of Persia bred wild beasts for the amuse-
 “ ment of hunting.”

But Mr. Salmon seems to think that even the exact place where Babylon stood is unknown, and in his modern history he thus writes : “ What is as strange as
 “ any thing that is related of Babylon is, that we can-
 “ not learn either by ancient writers or modern tra-
 “ vellers, where this famous city stood, only in ge-
 “ neral that it was situated in the province of Chal-
 “ dea, upon the river Euphrates, considerably above
 “ the place where it is united with the Tigris. Tra-
 “ vellers have guessed from the great ruins they
 “ have discovered in several parts of this country,
 “ that in this or that place Babylon once stood : but
 “ when we come to examine nicely the places they
 “ mention, we only learn that they are certainly in
 “ the wrong, and have mistaken the ruins of Seleu-
 “ cia, or some other great town.”

By these accounts we may learn how punctually the predictions of the sacred prophets, Isaiah and Jeremiah, concerning Babylon have been fulfilled. We may say, *How is Babylon become a desolation among the nations? Every purpose of JEHOVAH hath he performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant. JEHOVAH of Hosts hath swept it with the besom of destruction.*

Having set the destruction of Babylon before you in the clearest light that I am able, I come, Fourthly, to improve the subject to the purpose for which I have chosen it. I consider the utter ruin and destruction of the Chaldean empire, and the city of Babylon, as typical of the certain destruction of the kingdom of Satan and evil out of the universe.

There are several things that induce me to believe that the kingdom of Babylon stood as a type of the kingdom of evil, which is the kingdom of Satan.

1. This city or kingdom was founded in rebellion against God, as I may truly say. We can trace its origin up to the general agreement of the children of men which they made, combining against JEHOVAH, they said, "Go to, let us build us a city, " and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; " and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered " abroad upon the face of the whole earth." Gen. xi. 4. Pride, vanity, and self confidence evidently inspired mankind to build this city and tower, and therefore the city appears to me as the figure of evil.

2. It appears that this rebellious work was begun under the direction of the first general tyrant, even Nimrod, the son of Cush, the son of Ham. "And " Cush begat Nimrod, he began to be a mighty one " in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before JEHOVAH: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the " mighty hunter before JEHOVAH. And the beginning

“ginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech,
“and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.”

Gen. x. 8, 9, 10. This tyrant, after becoming famous for hunting beasts, found the art of tyrannizing over his fellow creatures. He seems to have had an unbounded ambition, and was himself a figure of Satan, or the God of his age, and his kingdom appears to me a type of the empire of the devil.

3. The whole earth in general, that is, the inhabitants of the world, agreed in this design of building the city and tower of Babel; so alas! all mankind have rebelled against God, and have been either setters up, promoters, or subjects of evil.

4. It was at the building of Babel that the language of men was confounded, *Babel* appears to signify *confusion*. The introduction of transgression into the world hath destroyed all that beautiful harmony and order that once subsisted; and confusion, envy, rage, and every kind of disorder, have succeeded.

5. This kingdom which begun at Babel, subsisted a long time; for I reckon the Chaldean empire as a continuation of the Assyrian. But Satan's kingdom hath already lasted much longer.

6. The empire of Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar, became as it were universal, subdued, tyrannized over, and distressed all the earth. Thus has the kingdom of evil done. Where has there been one nation,
people

people, family, or even an individual wholly exempted from its sway, or who has not suffered great misery thereby?

7. This cruel, powerful, prosperous empire was the great enemy of the visible Church of God, and even the beloved one of his soul was given into the hands of her enemies. Babylon prevailed against Jerusalem, contrary to the expectations of all the world. So we may say that evil hath hitherto been far superior to good, in power and universal dominion, and hath made war against the saints, hath prevailed against, overcome and destroyed them; according to the words of scripture. "And it was given
"unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." Rev. xiii. 7.

It may appear strange to some, why God should suffer wickedness so long to triumph, but the fact is certain, and thereby the words of God have been fulfilled. And from thence we may draw a certain argument for the final destruction of evil, and the universal prevalence of goodness; for if God has for so long time suffered that to prevail, which is contrary to his nature, that none of his words should fail; then certainly his promises in favour of the empire of goodness, which is his own nature, shall be amply fulfilled at last.

8. The city of Babylon was beautiful and glorious to the sight, and was adapted to please and gratify the
the

the senses of mankind. The case is the same with the great empire of evil. "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is of the world." 1 John. ii. 16. And these different lusts are highly gratifying to the carnal and corrupt inclinations of men. The riches, honours, and pleasures of the world carry many into captivity, and indeed enslave almost the whole of the human race.

9. The captive Jews lamented their bondage in Babylon, and when their enemies desired them to sing, they answered them saying, "How shall we sing JEHOVAH's song in a strange land?" Psalm cxxxvii. 4. The case is partly the same with those who are made sensible of the misery and slavery in which they are involved by sin. They lament in the following pathetic manner. "I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do, I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law
" of

“ of sin which is in my members. O wretched man
“ that I am! who shall deliver me from the body
“ of this death?” Rom. vii. 14, 15, 18, 19, 21,
22, 23, 24.

10. God threatened Babylon with final, total and endless destruction ; and hath promised as certainly that Jerusalem shall be again rebuilt, and safely inhabited, and shall be the joy and delight of the whole earth. The threatenings of the destruction of Babylon have been literally and fully accomplished, and I doubt not in the least, but all the promises respecting the future glory and prosperity of Jerusalem shall be as punctually fulfilled. It is also plain from many passages of Scripture, that God has promised to destroy all sin, sorrow, pain, misery, death, and the works of the devil, as absolutely as he threatened to destroy Babylon ; and he will cause righteousness and truth, the knowledge, fear, and love of God, holiness and happiness, as universally to prevail as ever sin and misery have done, and more so if possible. These great things he hath purposed and he will fulfil them.

11. The great numbers of prophecies respecting the destruction of Babylon, lead me to conclude that the Holy Ghost had some further view than the bare destruction of one particular city ; for the overthrow of that city was in itself but of small consequence, compared with the destruction of Satan's kingdom,

kingdom, which hath tyrannized over all mankind; and therefore its total abolition must be a matter of the greatest importance. And if it shall seem evident from what I have said, that in those numerous and very particular prophecies that related to the destruction of Babylon, the final and total annihilation of the empire of Satan, or the kingdom of evil was also intended, the scriptures will appear richer, and these predictions infinitely more important and interesting to mankind.

12. The amazing joy and gladness of mankind at the fall of Babylon, and that liberty and freedom, which the captive nations and enslaved people obtained by that joyful event, point out as by a beautiful figure, that universal happiness which the human race shall gain by the destruction of the kingdom of darkness; and induce me to believe that the prophecies alluded to greater and more interesting events than the overthrow of the Chaldean empire, and the desolation of the city of Babylon. I would not wish to be fanciful, and find allegories where the scripture intended none, but where so many striking circumstances meet, I think there can be hardly any danger of mistaking in the application.

13. Lastly, and to mention no more circumstances, if I was right in the three foregoing Lectures, in representing Nebuchadnezzar as a figure of Satan, there can be no doubt, but Babylon as certainly

stood a plain type of the kingdom and empire of the Prince of Darkness.

And if the process of subduing, humbling, and restoring Nebuchadnezzar, was intended to point out that Lucifer himself, the Prince of fallen angels, shall finally in like manner be subdued, humbled, and restored; then there can be no shadow of a doubt, but the events of the overthrow and utter desolation of great Babylon, so plainly foretold by the prophets, were also intended to teach us, that the blessed season will certainly come, when Satan's kingdom, including all sin, misery, evil works and their consequences, shall be so totally abolished as not to leave a wreck behind, nor the least trace in the wide creation. In this consideration I rejoice, yea, and I will rejoice.

“Behold, the Lamb of God, who taketh away, the sin of the world!” St. John, i. 29. “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.” 1 John iii. 5.

“For this purpose the son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” ver. 8.

If the sin of the world, and all our sins shall be taken away, and the works of the devil shall be destroyed, there can be but little ground for hesitation in these most glorious and animating views. I leave these matters to your serious consideration;

think, read and search for yourselves. I am satisfied in my own mind, of the truth and importance of these amazing discoveries; which afford me a fund of inexpressible joy and satisfaction, which I hope and trust no man shall ever be able to take from me.

END OF LECTURE XL.

LECTURE

LECTURE XLI.

The great Jubile under the Law, considered as a most glorious Figure of the final and universal Restoration of all Intelligences.

Lev. xxv. 8, 9, 10.

AND THOU SHALT NUMBER SEVEN SABBATHS OF YEARS UNTO THEE, SEVEN TIMES SEVEN YEARS: AND THE SPACE OF THE SEVEN SABBATHS OF YEARS SHALL BE UNTO THEE FORTY AND NINE YEARS. THEN SHALT THOU CAUSE THE TRUMPET OF THE JUBILE TO SOUND, ON THE TENTH DAY OF THE SEVENTH MONTH, IN THE DAY OF ATONEMENT SHALL YE MAKE THE TRUMPET SOUND THROUGHOUT ALL YOUR LAND. AND YE SHALL HALLOW THE FIFTIETH YEAR, AND PROCLAIM LIBERTY THROUGHOUT ALL THE LAND UNTO ALL THE INHABITANTS THEREOF: IT SHALL BE A JUBILE UNTO YOU: AND YE SHALL RETURN EVERY MAN UNTO HIS POSSESSION AND YE SHALL RETURN EVERY MAN UNTO HIS FAMILY.

THOUGH I have generally confined myself to prophecies, as being sure words of truth, spoken by the mouth of God, and which must be

fulfilled, yet I apprehend that types and figures have also their use, and are by no means to be despised. JEHOVAH not only performs all his promises, but fulfils every intimation that he hath been pleased to give us; and this observation is not confined to such hints as are given by words, but extends even to signs, types, shadows, figures and symbols: great numbers of which might be brought from the scriptures in confirmation of this remark; but I shall only instance a few out of many.

1. God instructed Abraham by causing *an horror of great darkness* to fall upon him, that his posterity should be in a miserable condition for a time in a strange land; and by causing *a smoaking furnace, and a burning lamp* to pass between the pieces of the divided beasts, the very kind of the labour wherewith the Egyptians afflicted the Israelites, (*viz. making and burning bricks*) seemed to be pointed out. But as Abraham soon waked out of sleep, and the horror of great darkness which fell upon him vanished, and the smoaking furnace, and the burning lamp, only passed between the pieces, and did not long abide; so deliverance was given to the Israelites at the appointed time. See Gen. xv. 12, 17.

2. In the institution of the Passover, the Israelites were forbidden to break a bone of the Lamb; Which plainly signified that not a bone of Christ, our Passover, should be broken, notwithstanding all his sufferings. See Exod. xii. 46. St. John, xix. 33, 36. 1 Cor. v. 7.

3. "The bodies of those beasts whose blood was brought into the sanctuary by the high Priest for sin, were burned without the camp.

"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." Heb. xiii. 11, 12. compared with Exod. xxix. 14. Lev. iv. 12, 20, 21. vi. 30. xvi. 27.

4. The entering of the high Priest alone into the most holy place within the vail, to make reconciliation for sin, was certainly intended as a figure of our blessed Saviour's going into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for us.

5. The brazen serpent, (as all Christians allow) was a lively type and figure of Christ, as it was a method of God's own appointing, was lifted up in the sight of all the people, and all that looked thereto were healed. See Num. xxi. 6—9. compared with St. John, iii. 14, 15.

6. The sign of the Prophet Jonah, was very remarkable, which I particularly considered in a former Lecture, wherein I shewed that in many instances he was a lively type of him who died for us, went down into the heart of the earth, and rose again on the third day.

I need not multiply particulars, for it seems evident that the Levitical law had in it a shadow of good things to come: and many of the ceremonies of it pointed to the blessed Redeemer, and have been fulfilled in his life, death, resurrection, &c. And

there is abundant reason to conclude that every thing pointed out in the law, either has been, or shall be accomplished under the Mediatorial economy.

Having thus endeavoured to establish and exemplify the doctrine of typical correspondencies, I shall proceed to consider particularly, this glorious type of the Jubile, and give my opinion respecting its signification.

The year of Jubile appears to be the great comprehensive age or period under the Jewish dispensation, and was made up of seven periods, or sabbaths of years, each of which contained seven years, This great period therefore naturally appears to me to correspond to the *age of ages*, so frequently mentioned or alluded to in the New Testament.

If the children of Israel celebrated the Jubile according to God's command, it must have been a most joyful and glorious season, even above conception. Those who had sold themselves, or their possessions, could no longer be kept in bondage, or be deprived of their inheritance.

It is highly reasonable to suppose, that such would look forward with great expectation for the period to arrive, when they should regain once more their liberty and patrimony, which they might foolishly have parted with; but owing to the beneficence of their gracious Lord and King, they could not forfeit either for more than fifty years at the most, (except
in

in the particular instance) of a house in a walled city.
 ver. 29, 30.

The Jubile was ordered to be proclaimed by the sound of a trumpet, on the tenth day of the seventh month, on the great day of atonement in every fiftieth year; and every person was to go out free; and each one was to return to his family, and to his inheritance.

How wise, just, and good was this ordinance! God would not have his purchased people always enslaved; nor his land entirely alienated from those for whom he designed it, and to whom he gave it.

"The land shall not be sold for ever; for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me. And in all the land of your possession, ye shall grant a redemption for the land." Lev. xxv. 23, 24.

It was kind, as well as wise of the Lord, to prevent the absolute ruin of even the meanest and most unworthy of the people, by putting it out of their power to forfeit their liberty, or alienate their possessions, except for a limited time. They might be *poor slaves*, destitute of freedom or property, forty nine years, but no longer, according to the law of God.

Now, what do we learn from this ordinance of the Jubile? What does this glorious type represent to us? To me, it appears almost as plain as the sun at noon in a clear day, to point out the final and

universal restoration of all fallen intelligences. For can we possibly imagine, that the glorious Lord, who would not permit the children of Israel to alienate their inheritances, or part with their freedom for a longer time than forty-nine years, would put it into the power of any of his rational creatures to sell themselves as bond slaves of sin and Satan for so long as they shall exist, and lose the glorious inheritance for which he created them, to all eternity? It seems highly absurd to suppose any such thing. I therefore conclude that he that took such effectual care to provide for the ultimate security of the temporal happiness of Israel, has not omitted to secure infallibly the ultimate and endless felicity of all his rational creatures; and however they may have forfeited both their freedom and inheritance, it can only be for certain periods, until the great *age of ages* shall arrive. Then shall God cause the trumpet of the Jubile to sound, and every man shall be set at liberty, and go out free, whatever state of bondage he was in before; and every man shall return to God, and be adopted into his family, and shall obtain his inheritance.

I shall make a few brief remarks upon the words before us, and apply them to the subject of the general Restoration.

1. There is something very particular in the time mentioned, *seven sabbaths of years, forty and nine years*. The Jubile trumpet was to sound in the fiftieth

fiftieth year, and not before. This to me, seems to cast some light upon those periods called *ages*, which shall last to the great comprehensive *age of ages*. If the seventh year, or the year of release, (as well as the seventh day) points to the blessed Millenium, which we trust will shortly be made evident by its fulfilment, then the grand Jubile, or the concluding period of the Restoration, requires the time of forty and nine thousand years before its completion. I am apt to think this must be the truth, for to what else can these long periods of *seven weeks of years* allude? Most certainly they cannot point to any thing that has yet taken place in the world, since even the type of the seventh year has not been accomplished, and much less the year of Jubile, which certainly involves seven such periods.

The ways of God are all harmony and order, and such a disposition of times and seasons, seems highly proper and reasonable; reflects great honour upon the wisdom of God, and provides time sufficient for the entire accomplishment of all the scripture prophecies, in a distinct and gradual manner, so as to be seen and observed by all intelligences. By this beautiful order, and grand disposing of seasons, every design of God may be so fulfilled, as to bring the highest possible glory to his name, and make all intelligences know, observe, and confess the work to be his own. The circle here described, is vastly larger than many are willing to allow; but when we

consider the number and greatness of the events yet to take place, we must acknowledge that there is a beauty in the design, which is lost if we contract our ideas into a small and diminutive circle. This type of the Jubile is the only hint I can find in the scriptures that gives me light into the time of the continuance of the Mediatorial dispensation. This figure must intend something, and something far beyond what has ever yet taken place; and I can find nothing else to which it can fairly be applied, but to the time of the final Restoration of all things.

2. At the end of the periods the Jubile was to be published by the sound of the trumpet throughout all the land. What glorious musick was the sound of that trumpet to those who had sold their inheritances, or were themselves enslaved! methinks they leaped for joy, and were ready to cry out, 'Now the long wished for time is come! we are freed from our misery! we shall be slaves no longer! we shall regain our inheritances which we parted with so foolishly, and enjoy those blessings and privileges which we have so long been deprived of by our own faults! Blessed be the name of JEHOVAH our King, who hath prevented our forfeiting our liberties and possessions for ever!'

But if such was the joy of the people at hearing the trumpet of the Jubile sound, what unknown and inconceivable raptures will fill the souls of the miserable

miserable in that glorious day, when the great trumpet of heaven's Jubile shall be sounded, loud as immortal breath; and all the outcasts shall be gathered together, and shall adore before the throne of God and the Lamb.

I may apply these words of Isaiah to this blessed period, in a figure in the highest and sublimest sense.

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come who were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship JEHOVAH in the holy mount at Jerusalem.” Isai. xxvii. 13.

“And the ransomed of JEHOVAH shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness; and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” Chap. xxxv. 10. li. 11.

3. I observe, the trumpet of the Jubile was to be sounded *in the day of atonement*. This teaches me, that the final release of all captives will be brought about through the virtue and efficacy of that great atonement, propitiation or reconciliation made by our blessed Redeemer on the cross; when he *died for all, gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, and by the grace of God, tasted death for every man, and was the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.* 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. 1 Tim. ii. 6. Heb. ii. 9. 1 John, ii. 2.

It is by the blood of the everlasting covenant, that the prisoners whom Jesus hath purchased, shall be sent forth out of the pit wherein is no water; no, not one drop of comfort to be found. Zec. ix. 11.

But since Jesus hath died for all mankind, without exception, as the above passages of plain scripture testify, and since it is also said, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied," Isai. liii. 11. What shall hinder him from proclaiming universal liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound? Isai. lxi. 1. Can it be thought unjust or unreasonable that he should have his own? hath he not purchased them? and shall he not possess them? God is no respecter of persons; he loveth all his creatures, and he hath devised means that his banished be not expelled from him. 2 Sam. xiv. 14. And shall not those means be effectual? Shall not the Lord Jesus Christ, our spiritual David, without fail, recover all that the enemy hath led captive? See 1 Sam. xxx. 8.

If God hath given his Son, his only begotten and well beloved Son to die for all, is it possible that he should withhold any thing necessary to their final recovery? Jesus hath paid an invaluable price for men, and he will not be disappointed. He is mighty to save, and he will not lose those on whose account he hath suffered so much.

4. It is with the greatest pleasure I take notice, that the trumpet of the Jubile was to be sounded throughout

throughout *all the land*; liberty was to be proclaimed *throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.*

Oh what a glorious type was this, of that universal proclamation of liberty which the Lord shall make throughout the universe, in that blessed day when he shall "say to the prisoners, Go forth: to "them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves!" Isai. xlix. 9.

He shall "bring out the prisoners from the "prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the "prison house." Chap. xlii. 7.

Then "such as sit in darkness, and in the shadow "of death, being bound in affliction and iron; because they rebelled against the words of God, and "contemned the counsel of the Most High;" shall be saved out of their distresses; shall be brought out of darkness and the shadow of death; and their bands shall be broken in sunder. The gates of brass shall be broken, and the bars of iron shall be cut in sunder; and the long imprisoned captives shall be set at liberty. See Psal. cvii. 10—16.

Those who have been in great tribulation shall then be released, shall wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb; all the slaves of sin shall be eternally freed from the love, reigning power, guilt, pollution, and condemnation of sin. Not only the few saved ones, who were redeemed from the earth, but the great multitude
whom

Whom no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues, shall stand before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and shall cry with a loud voice, "Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. See Rev. v. 11. 916, 14.

This will be indeed such a new, such an astonishing and universal Jubile, (to use the words of the pious Dr. Watts) as must fill Heaven, Earth and Hell with Hallelujahs and Joy.

For this grandest of all the divine manifestations the earnest expectation of the creature, or the whole creation, waiteth, yea, groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now. But then, "The creature itself also, (or the whole creation) shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, (which certainly includes sin with all its direful consequences) into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Rom. viii. 19, 20, 21, 22.

Oh how the wide universe shall ring with transports of the highest joy, when the day of deliverance for the captives shall arrive! and when it shall be proclaimed by the command of the King of kings throughout his extensive dominions.

"The year of Jubile is come,

"Return ye ransom'd sinners home."

The Jubile not only proclaimed liberty to bond slaves, and let them know that they might be

free

free, if they chose it, (as the year of release did) but it actually set them free; there was an end put to their servitude, by whatever means they came into a state of bondage, whether by their poverty, or by force, the power of others, or their own consent. The age, called for ever, during which time the servant that refused to be free from his master, was to serve him, expired at the year of Jubile; beyond which happy period none were to remain in slavery, subject to the will and power of others; all the inhabitants of the land at the sound of the trumpet were to be set free from men, but were to remain servants to him, *Whose service is perfect freedom.* So when the great Jubile trumpet of JEHOVAH shall sound throughout his vast extended empire, it shall not only give slaves the choice of their freedom (as the Gospel trumpet now does) but shall actually put a final irrevocable and eternal end to their bondage. Free from all other Lords and masters, all rational creatures shall from that time forward, serve, love, and obey their great Creator, Redeemer, and Restorer; and thrall shall never more be known.

The empire of Satan shall be no more, and the dominion of sin shall be destroyed. God will dwell with men, “and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and “there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor “crying, neither shall there be any more pain:” for

I shall dwell at

at that time it shall be truly said, "The former things (among which are sin and misery) are passed away." Then shall all things be made new without exception. Rev. xxi. 3, 4, 5.

O glorious day! O happy year of Jubile! in which the whole creation is interested!

6. I find that when the Jubile trumpet was to sound, not only were all the inhabitants of the land to be set free, but it was expressly said, *And ye shall return every man to his possession.*

If the Jubile had only given bond slaves their freedom, it would have been a great and unspeakable benefit; but how much more so when it put them in possession of those inheritances of which they had long been deprived!

This shews by a most lively and beautiful figure, that when the great Jubile shall arrive, every man shall not only be freed from the slavery of sin, and bondage of misery, but shall return to the inheritance for which God designed him, and which shall then be given him.

Now it is certain that men were originally created for happiness, but this inheritance they have forfeited, and lost, by sin and transgression: yet this shall be restored to them by Jesus Christ, in the great Jubile year.

Eternal life is the free gift of God to mankind; and our Lord Jesus Christ said to his Father, "As thou hast given him (thy Son) power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou
" hast

"hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they
 "might know thee the only true God, and Jesus
 "Christ whom thou hast sent." St. John, xvii. 2, 3.

It appears evident from these words, that Christ will finally give eternal life to all that the Father hath given him; and it is equally plain from other scriptures, that "The Father loveth the Son, and
 "hath given all things into his hand." St. John, iii 35. "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, &c." Chap. xiii. 3. "All things
 "are delivered unto me of my Father." St. Matt. xi. 27. St. Luke, x. 22. Thus when the Lord Jesus shall proclaim liberty to all the captives, and set every man free from bondage, misery, and the tyranny of sin and death, he shall cause them to return to that inheritance for which God created them at first, and which is given to them in Christ, and to which they shall actually be restored in the great Jubile.

For though "The wages of sin are death," which every soul of man that sinneth shall receive, as the just reward of his transgressions; yet "The gift of
 "God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our
 "Lord." Rom. vi. 23.

And this gift will the Saviour give to all men at the final consummation, since the Father hath given him power over all flesh, for that very purpose, that he should give eternal life to all that were given him of the Father. "And this is the promise that
 " he

“he hath promised us, even eternal life. If we re-
 “ceive the witness of men, the witness of God is
 “greater: for this is the witness of God which he
 “hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on
 “the Son of God, hath the witness in himself: he
 “that believeth not God, hath made him a liar;
 “because he believeth not the record that God gave
 “of his Son. And this is the record that God hath
 “given to us, eternal life: and this life is in his
 “Son.” 1 John, ii. 23. Comp. v. 9, 10, 11.

If all men are required to believe the record God hath given of his Son, and are in danger of making him a liar if they do not, and if that record be eternal life, then it is evident that God hath given to all men eternal life in his Son Jesus Christ: to which glorious inheritance they shall return, when the grand proclamation shall be made,

“The year of Jubile is come,

“Return ye ransom’d sinners home.”

7. But it is not only said that when the Jubile trumpet sounded, every man was to return to his possession, but it is graciously added, *And ye shall return every man to his family.*

Oh what an addition was this! It was a great blessing to be set free from bondage, to regain that liberty which they had parted with, but much more so to have their possessions restored to them: but great
 of

of all to be admitted again into their original families, from whence they had been long banished and estranged.

And this shall be the happy state of all the human race when they shall be delivered from bondage and tyranny, and restored to their inheritance, they shall then return to their original family, and be kindly received.

This naturally leads us to enquire what family man originally descended from; and consequently, to which he shall return. And the Evangelist St. Luke has traced up the great family of man to its fountain head: after tracing it up to Noah, he goes up to "Seth, who was the son of Adam, who was the son of God." Created by him, and had no other Father. St. Luke iii. 38.

But as this is a matter of very great consequence, and as I am engaged in defence of the noblest rights of man, in comparison of which all others are of little value, and as I find powerful advocates to oppose the plea that I make in favour of the universal brotherhood of man, and of the right and privilege of mankind to call God their Father, and claim kindred with the skies; I shall therefore trace their high descent from its original, and set their unalienable rights before them, drawn from the sacred records, that grand charter, which contains all their privileges.

Gon. i. 26, 27, 28. "And God said, Let us
 "make man in our image, after our likeness, &c.
 "So God created man in his own image; in the
 "image of God created he him; male and female
 "created he them. And God blessed them, &c."

Chap. ii. 7. "And JEHOVAH God formed man
 "of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his
 "nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living
 "soul." Chap. ix. 6. "Who so sheddeth man's
 "blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the
 "image of God made he man:"

These are direct proofs of man's high original,
 being created by God immediately, and in his own
 image and likeness; and God distinguished him
 from all his other works, by breathing into his nos-
 trils the breath of life.

In this sense all men are by nature equal, whether
 masters or servants, kings or subjects, and therefore
 holy Job said, "If I did despise the cause of my man-
 "servant or of my maid-servant, when they con-
 "tended with me; what then shall I do when God
 "riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I an-
 "swer him? Did not he that made me in the womb,
 "make him? and did not one fashion us in the
 "womb?" Jobl. xxxi. 13, 14, 15.

God himself by the Prophet Ezekiel hath declar-
 ed the descent of man, by declaring all souls alike
 to be his property. "Behold, all souls are mine;

"as

“as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the Son
“is mine.” Ezek. xviii. 4.

And the prophet Malachi says, “Have we not
“all one Father? hath not one God created us?
“why do we deal treacherously every man against
“his brother?” Mal. iii. 10.

But the masterly reasoning of Paul of Tarsus,
(who is mentioned in such a respectful manner by
Longinus, in his Treatise on the Sublime) is so much
to my present purpose, that I must beg leave to
make a pretty long quotation from him. “God
“that made the world and all things therein, seeing
“that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not
“in temples made with hands; neither is worship-
“ped with men’s hands, as though he needed any
“thing, seeing he giveth to all life and breath, and
“all things; and hath made of one blood all na-
“tions of men for to dwell on all the face of the
“earth, and hath determined the times before ap-
“pointed, and the bounds of their habitation;
“that they should seek the Lord, if haply they
“might feel after him, and find him, though he be
“not far from every one of us: for in him we live,
“and move, and have our being; as certain also of
“your own Poets have said; For we are also his
“offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the off-
“spring of God, we ought not to think that the
“Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone,

"graven by art and man's device." Acts xvii.
24—29.

Many other proofs I might bring from the Scriptures that God is our Father and our Creator, and that we all belong originally to his great family; but these are fully sufficient for the present.

I will however before I leave this part of my subject just draw a few plain consequences from these grand premises.

1. God loved his creatures when he made them, and as he is an unchangeable God he loves them still.—"For thou lovest all things that are,"
"and hatest nothing that thou hast made; for
"never wouldst thou have made any thing if thou
"hadst hated it. Wisdom xi. 24.

"For I am JEHOVAH, I change not; therefore ye
"sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal. iii. 6.
"Thy mercy, O JEHOVAH, endureth for ever; for-
"sake not the works of thine own hands." Psalm
cxxxviii. 8.

"JEHOVAH is gracious, and full of compassion;
"slow to anger, and of great mercy. JEHOVAH is
"good to all: and his tender mercies are over all
"his works." Psal. cxlv. 8, 9.

2. That as God is the Father of his creatures, and is universally benevolent towards them, it is evident that he will not suffer them to be always banished from his presence, nor let his anger remain upon them to all eternity.

"For

“ For I will not contend for ever, neither will I
 “ be always wroth; for the spirit should fail before
 “ me, and the souls which I have made.” *Isai. lvii.*
 16.

“ JEHOVAH is merciful and gracious, slow to an-
 “ ger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not al-
 “ ways chide: neither will he keep his anger for
 “ ever. *Psal. ciii. 8, 9.*

“ For his anger endureth but a moment; in his
 “ favour is life; weeping may endure for a night,
 “ but joy cometh in the morning.” *Psal. xxx. 5.*

3. All his creatures shall finally praise love and
 adore him.

“ All nations whom thou hast made shall come
 “ and worship before thee, O JEHOVAH! and shall
 “ glorify thy name.” *Psal. lxxxvi. 9.*

“ All the ends of the world shall remember and
 “ turn unto JEHOVAH; and all the kindreds of the
 “ nations shall worship before thee.” *Psal. xxii.*
 27.

“ All thy works shall praise thee, O JEHOVAH;
 “ and thy saints shall bless thee.” *Psal. cxlv.*
 10.

“ Every thing that hath breath shall praise Jah.”
Psal. cl. 6.

These are some of the happy consequences that
 follow from these glorious truths, that God hath
 created us, and is therefore our Father, and we are
 his children. All men belong originally to the fa-

mily of God, to which therefore they shall return at the Great Jubile. But it may be said, that though all men were at first of the family of God, yet they having sinned against him, are banished from his sight, and must be redeemed before they can return home. This I grant, and therefore I shall spend a little time in further asserting and proving the true dignity of man, forasmuch as God is not only his Creator, but his Redeemer likewise.

It may truly be said of and to all fallen sinful men, as Moses said concerning the children of Israel, "They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation. Do ye thus requite JEHOVAH, O foolish people and unwise? is he not thy Father, who hath bought thee? hath he not made thee and established thee?" Deut. xxxii. 5, 6.

We poor sinful creatures may look up to our Creator and say, "Doubtless, thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou, O JEHOVAH, art our Father, our Redeemer, thy name is from everlasting." Isai. lxiii. 16.

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind have taken us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee; for thou hast hid thy face from

" us

“ us, and hast consumed us because of our iniquities. But now, O JEHOVAH, thou art our Father ; we are the clay, and thou our potter ; and we all are the work of thy hand. Be not wroth very sore, O JEHOVAH, neither remember iniquity for ever ; behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people.” *Isai. lxiv. 6, 7, 8, 9.*

God speaking to the disobedient children of Israel saith, “ But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations ? and I said, Thou shalt call me, My Father ; and shalt not turn away from me.” *Jer. iii. 19.*

And God by the Prophet Hosea says of Israel, “ Though I have redeemed them, yet they have spoken lies against me.” *Hos. vii. 13.*

This is too much the case of many who deny that God is the Redeemer of all men, and thus they speak lies against him, and as the Apostle says, they “ bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.” *2. Pet. ii. 1.* But although they and many may deny the Lord that bought them, yet still he is their Redeemer, and will finally be their Restorer. “ This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation : For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour (or Restorer) of all

“men, especially of those that believe.” 1. Tim. iv. 9, 10.

It is evident that men may claim a right to call the God of heaven and earth their Father, Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer. I have before proved that God hath sent his Son into the world to redeem mankind, and that he hath died for them all without exception. They are not their own, they are bought with a price, therefore they are exhorted not to be the servants of men, but to glorify God with their bodies and spirits, which are God's.— See 1. Cor. vi. 19, 20. Chap. vii. 23. 1. Pet. i. 18, 19.

All men therefore belong to the family of God, as they are purchased with the blood of Jesus: He is the second or last Adam, the head of every man; see 1. Cor. xv. 22, 45—49. Chap. xi. 3, and he hath undertaken to draw all men to himself. See St. John. xii. 32. And he hath promised that all that the Father giveth him shall come to him, and shall so come as not to be cast out, and that nothing which the Father hath given him shall be lost, but that all shall be taught of God, and shall come to him at last. See St. John vi. 37, 38, 39, 40, 44, 45.

Thus in the great Jubile year shall every man return to his possession, which is eternal life; and every man shall return to his original family, which is the family of God.

If there is such joy in heaven, among the angels of God over even but one sinner that repenteth, what unknown and inconceivable joy and rejoicing will fill all the celestial regions, and the wide extended universe, when every sinner shall absolutely return home to their Father's house, never more to go astray? The prodigal son was kindly received, though he had spent all his portion; his father was his father still, and received him in the kindest manner with open arms of love, and greatly rejoiced over him, as one that had been dead, but was then restored to life again, had been lost, but was found. See St. Luke xv. the whole of which chapter points out the amazing kindness and love of our heavenly Father to his poor lost miserable creatures.

But I must hasten to a close. The Jubile will arrive, when "Every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear." That "dispensation of the fulness of times" shall surely come, when the glorious God, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth." Shall "gather together (or rehead) in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." In whom it has pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell. "And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto

“unto himself; by him I say, whether they be
“things in earth, or things in heaven.

“God hath highly exalted him, and given him
“a name which is above every name; that in the
“name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things
“in heaven, and things on earth, and things under
“the earth; and that every tongue should confess
“that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the
“Father.” Then shall “Every creature who is in
“heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth,
“and such as are in the sea, and all that are in
“them,” say, “Blessing and honour and glory and
“power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne,
“and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” See *Isai.*
xlv. 23. Ephes. i. 10, 11. 1 Tim. ii. 4. Col. i. 19,
20. Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11. Rev. v. 13.

All language fails to describe the glory of that scene, when the whole family of God shall be gathered together in harmony and love, no more to be separated for ever; all discords shall be at an end throughout the wide empire of *JEHOVAH*; and peace, love, and joy, shall eternally reign in every heart, and God shall be all in all.

But my soul overflows with rapture at the delightful prospect, and therefore I will vent my heart in the following lines, with which I shall conclude this Lecture.

HAIL glorious DAY! from antient times foretold!
Proclaim'd by types and prophecies of old!

Thou

Thou day of Heav'n's eternal Jubile,
Ordain'd of God to set poor captives free!
Great day, for which all other days were made!
Which God well pleas'd foresaw, when he survey'd
Man by rebellion ruin'd, lost, undone,
Redeem'd restor'd by Jesus Christ his Son.
Thou day of God, prefigur'd by the law,
And which the prophets at a distance saw:
The grandeur of thy scenes I would proclaim,
If God would touch my lips with heav'nly flame.
To me, O God, the learned's tongue impart;
Direct my fancy, and inspire my heart.
Fix'd by the Great Eternal's firm decree,
Thy date is wrapt in awful mystery:
So far remote that day, conceal'd from view
Its hidden periods, and its wonders too,
That men impiously traduce, blaspheme,
And count th' Important Day a fictitious dream.
Assist me Faith, Hope, Charity, divine,
(I prize your aid, I'll not invoke the Nine.)
Teach me that hidden period to explore,
When sin, and pain, and death shall be no more.
When Christ shall over all his foes prevail,
And spoil the pow'rs of darkness, death and hell.
Then shall Creation own his sov'reign sway,
And ev'ry creature willingly obey.
Each knee shall bow, and ev'ry tongue shall swear,
While heav'n and earth his right to reign declare.

To

To all mankind it shall be testify'd,
In that due time the Saviour for them dy'd.
All things in him shall then reheaded be;
All own him Lord, and bow the suppliant knee.
All reconcil'd to God, his love shall know,
Whether in heav'n above, or earth below.
The YEAR of JUBILE shall then be come,
And All the Saviour purchas'd shall come home.
The Mediator shall no more complain,
That he hath labour'd, spoke, or dy'd in vain;
The travail of his soul with joy shall see,
And satisfy'd eternally shall be.
The TRUMPET of the JUBILE shall sound;
Jesus shall be with endless glory crown'd;
And through the great JEHOVAH's wide domain,
Not one shall rise against his glorious reign:
But all from sin, and death, and bondage free,
Shall praise his name to all eternity.
When all are thus obedient to his call,
Christ will resign, and God be ALL IN ALL.
Here stop my soul: no farther seek to go;
What God reveals is quite enough to know.

LECTURE XLH.

*The grand and concluding Scene of Divine Revelation;
the End of the Mediatorial Kingdom. GOD ALL IN
ALL.*

I COR. xv. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28.

THEN COMETH THE END, WHEN HE SHALL HAVE DELIVERED UP THE KINGDOM TO GOD EVEN THE FATHER; WHEN HE SHALL HAVE PUT DOWN ALL RULE AND ALL AUTHORITY AND POWER, FOR HE MUST REIGN TILL HE HATH PUT ALL ENEMIES UNDER HIS FEET. THE LAST ENEMY THAT SHALL BE DESTROYED IS DEATH. FOR HE HATH PUT ALL THINGS UNDER HIS FEET. BUT WHEN HE SAITH, ALL THINGS ARE PUT UNDER HIM, IT IS MANIFEST THAT HE IS EXCEPTED WHO DID PUT ALL THINGS UNDER HIM, AND WHEN ALL THINGS SHALL BE SUBDUED UNTO HIM, THEN SHALL THE SON ALSO HIMSELF BE SUBJECT UNTO HIM THAT PUT ALL THINGS UNDER HIM, THAT GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL.

I AM now come in the course of these Lectures, to the grand and closing scene: our Saviour's resignation of the kingdom delegated to him by the Father,

Father, after he shall have accomplished all the glorious designs for which it was committed into his faithful hands.

This is a very deep, important and interesting subject, and I feel myself incapable of doing justice to it, but as the Lord has helped me hitherto, even beyond my expectation, I trust he will not forsake me at the close. The grandeur of the subject is such as inspires my soul with a reverential awe that language would fail to describe. And having employed considerable time and attention in the contemplation thereof, I feel its consequence and weight in a manner that I cannot express. But having the unerring word of God for my directory here, as I have had all along, I shall venture to tread this devotional path, and endeavour to paint as well as I am able, the glorious scene with which the book of divine Revelation closes: when the blessed and glorious Redeemer, having subdued all things to himself, shall resign the kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all.

This is the only passage of Scripture that contains any intimation of Christ's delivering up the kingdom to the Father, but as it was written by divine inspiration, this grand event, and closing scene is by no means to be disputed, or explained away.

In discoursing upon this glorious subject, I shall follow the order of the words, and make such remarks as may present themselves to my mind as I pass along.

Then

Then cometh the end, &c. These words teach us the important truth that the Mediatorial dispensation will as certainly come to a period or close, as any other dispensation ever did; though it is by no means of so short a duration as many take it to be. Some make it to end at the second coming of Christ; and others immediately after the general Judgment: but I have in the course of these Lectures given my thoughts so fully upon these opinions, and the reasons why I cannot concur with them, that I trust I have no need to repeat them in this place. We may here once more observe, that the word rendered *everlasting*, does not signify *endless*, even when applied to the kingdom of Christ; (as it frequently is in the Scriptures) since here it is positively asserted, that there shall be *an end* to the glorious kingdom of the Son of God, so often called *an everlasting kingdom* in our translation; but which I humbly apprehend, might better be called *a kingdom of ages*.

Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; but not until he hath put down all rule, and all authority, and all power. For the kingdom was given to him for this very purpose, and this he will certainly accomplish, to the praise and glory of his name. His engagements he must fulfil, according to the nature and tenor of the counsel of peace,
which

which was between the Father and his well beloved Son; for (as the Prophet says) “The counsel of peace shall be between them both.” Zech. vi. 13. And according to the inspired language of Isaiah, there seems to have been the nature of a covenant between the Father and the Son, which appears in his being given for a covenant to the people, Chap. xlii. 6. xlix. 8. and the words in Chap. lili. 10, 11, are fairly capable of being rendered in such a manner as to make a mutual agreement evident. “If he shall make his soul a sin offering, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of JEHOVAH shall prosper in his hand. “He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied, &c.

And the words of Christ himself in St. John, vi. 37, 38, 39, 40. seem very plainly to imply that he came down from heaven upon an errand of great importance, and which he had engaged to execute, nor can he leave any part of his work unfinished.

God the Father having given him all things without exception, according to those texts more than once already quoted in this work, (St. John, iii. 35. xiii. 3. xvii. 2. compared with St. Matt. xi. 27. and St. Luke, x. 22.) expects that the Son of his love will put a final and total end to all rebellion, and bring all the rightful subjects of the Almighty Sovereign back again to their allegiance. And Jesus evidently considers himself under obligations to perform

perform this great work before he delivers up the kingdom to the Father. And I cannot but think that is fully qualified for the performance of all that he hath engaged to do, and that he will certainly accomplish it.

For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

It is of absolute necessity, that his reign shall endure until there is no more opposition, no more rebellion or disobedience to be found in the wide creation. "Jehovah said unto my Adonai, or "Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make "thine enemies thy footstool." Psalm. cx. 1. This the modern Jews apply to David, but it is certain that in our Saviour's time they understood it to relate to the Christ, or the Messiah, the son of David, although they were puzzled at our Lord's question, and were not able to resolve him how the Messiah could be both the Son and Lord of David at the same time. See St. Matt. xxii. 42, 43, 44, 45. St. Mark, xii. 35, 36, 37. St. Luke xx. 41, 42, 43, 44.

And St. Peter, applies those words of David directly to Jesus, saying, "For David is not ascended "into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord "said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, "until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let "all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God "hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Acts ii. 34, 35, 36.

D d

When

When our blessed Saviour was exalted at the Father's right hand according to the scriptures, then this promise began to be fulfilled. He was then set "Far above all principality and power, and might" "and dominion, and every name that is named not" "only in this world, (or age) but also in that" "which is to come." And the Father "put all" "things under his feet, and gave him to be the" "head over all things to the church." Ephes. i. 21, 22. Our Lord "is gone into heaven, and is" "on the right hand of God, angels and authorities" "and powers being made subject unto him." 1 Pet. iii. 22.

Thus all things were put under him in the divine purpose, without exception, but all things are not yet put under him in the sense of these words in 1 Cor. xv. 25. because it is said that *he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet*: which plainly shews that it is not yet the case. And the words of the Apostle in his epistle to the Hebrews, Heb. ii. 8. express the same idea, "Thou hast put all things in" "subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in" "subjection under him, he left nothing that is not" "put under him: but now we see not yet all things" "put under him." Here it is evident, that in the purpose of God all things are put under Christ, and subjected to him in so universal a manner, as that there is not the least exception; yet it is equally evident that all things are not yet actually put under him

him: the divine counsels, respecting this important matter, are not fulfilled before the eyes of creatures; but they must be. All the enemies of our Lord must come to be subject to him in a sense far different from what ever hath yet taken place: and Christ must reign until this grand purpose shall be fully accomplished. God says, "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return; That unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear. Isai. xlv. 23. And the Apostle St. Paul, after speaking of our dear Saviour's amazing humiliation, even to the death of the cross, says, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11. When this comes to be actually fulfilled, then it may be truly said, that all our Lord's enemies are in the strictest sense put under his feet, but not before; and this is spoken of by the Apostle as something future, and far remote.

The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death, or more properly, Death the last enemy shall be destroyed.

There are some who would wish to confine this destruction to the death of the body, or that which is called the natural death: but to me it appears, that every thing that bears the name of *death* in the sacred Scriptures, must be included, and is really intended here. Death and misery of every kind shall be abolished, done away, swallowed up in victory, &c. and nothing but life and happiness shall remain. I cannot help considering this as the genuine sense and meaning of the following glorious promises. "He will swallow up death in victory; "and Adonai JEHOVAH will wipe away tears from "off all faces, &c. *Isai. xxv. 8.*

"I will ransom them (even such who perish in their iniquity and sin, as is evident from the context,) from the power of the grave: (or hell) I "will redeem them from death: O death I will be "thy plagues; O grave (or hell) I will be thy de- "struction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." *Hosea xiii. 14.*

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their "eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither "sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any "more pain: for the former things are passed "away." *Rev. xxi. 4.*

Then shall the song of triumph be sung, "Death "is swallowed up in victory!" And the great and mighty challenge shall be proclaimed through all the empire of JEHOVAH, "O death, where is thy "fling?"

“sting? O grave (or hell) where is thy victory?”
 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55. But surely while sin, which is the sting of death, is found in existence, and while pain, sorrow, crying, &c. continue in the universe, it can hardly be said, that Death is swallowed up in victory; and while the second death lasts, which is certainly the most terrible kind of death, how can it be said, O death, where is thy sting? and, O grave (or hell) where is thy victory? But to me, scarce any thing appears more plain than the certain annihilation or total destruction of all that ever bore the name of *death*. Then it may be truly said, “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so *bath* grace *reigned* through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Rom. v. 20, 21.

But prior to the total destruction of death, all other enemies, that is, all rebellious creatures, shall be humbled, and shall willingly submit to Jesus, and be his enemies no longer: for certainly at the time when the last enemy shall be destroyed, no enemies can remain in the universe.

For he hath put all things under his feet: but when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted who did put all things under him.

This reasoning of the Apostle seems almost self-evident; for nothing can be more manifest, than that he (the eternal Father) who put all things un-

der Christ the Son, is himself excepted. Even as Pharaoh said to Joseph, when he made him governor or ruler over all the land of Egypt,

“ Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this,
 “ there is none so discreet and wise as thou art!
 “ Thou shalt be over my house, and according to
 “ thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in
 “ the throne will I be greater than thou. And
 “ Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee
 “ over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh took
 “ off his ring from his hand, and put it upon
 “ Joseph’s hand, and arrayed him in vestures of
 “ fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck:
 “ and he made him to ride in the second chariot
 “ which he had: and they cried before him, Bow
 “ the knee: and he made him ruler over all the
 “ land of Egypt. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph,
 “ I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift
 “ up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.”
 Gen. xli. 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44.

The whole of this transaction was a wonderful type, and a most beautiful illustration of the subject I am now upon.

Pharaoh set Joseph over the land of Egypt because there was none so discreet and wise as he was, that understood the matter so well, was so competent to every part of the business, and that would be so faithful and diligent in the discharge of the same. Pharaoh in choosing Joseph, and placing him over
 all

all the land, shewed his own wisdom and discernment to be great. Even so the wisdom and goodness of God shone conspicuously in placing his dear Son in so glorious and important a situation. For where is there one in heaven or earth worthy to be named in comparison with Jesus? so prudent, so wise, so faithful, so just, so competent to every part of his work? The Father hath therefore intrusted him with all the concerns of the wide extended universe, as Pharaoh did Joseph with the land of Egypt and all things therein.

Pharaoh gave Joseph full power, and unlimited and absolute authority over all his people, but excepted himself, in the same manner as the Apostle declares the Father to be excepted. *It is manifest that he is excepted who did put all things under him.*

But this exception being expressly made (though it was evidently implied in the nature of the thing) plainly shews that none else can possibly be excepted, whether things in heaven, things in earth, or things under the earth. Christ is truly and really over all, (the Father only excepted) *God blessed for ever.* Rom. ix. 5.

All are put under him in the most absolute and universal manner, and all are commanded to *bow the knee* to him, as the Egyptians were commanded to bow the knee to Joseph. To Jesus Christ the Saviour, every knee shall surely bow, and every tongue shall certainly confess him Lord.

“ When all the land of Egypt was famished, the
“ people cried to Pharaoh for bread : and Pharaoh
“ said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph;
“ what he saith to you, do.” Gen xli. 55. So the
Father having given all things into the hands of
Christ, and committed all authority and judgment
to him, directeth all mankind to look to him for
salvation; his language is, “ Go to Jesus; what-
“ soever he saith unto you, do it. Believe on Jesus :
“ See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; If ye
“ will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.” God
requires all men to hearken to Jesus, and to do his will
without murmuring or disputing, upon pain of his
severe displeasure. The Son of God is appointed to
be the universal Lord and ruler over all, and all
shall submit to him at last.

Joseph had the absolute disposal of all the Egyp-
tians and all their affairs, both by the appointment
of Pharaoh, and also by their own consent, as ap-
pears by the story at large: so the blessed Jesus has
absolute authority over all rational creatures, by the
Father’s appointment and good pleasure, and shall
finally have dominion over all by their own volun-
tary submission and free consent. So that the
administration of Joseph over the land of Egypt,
was one of the most lively pictures of the universal
government, authority, and dominion of Christ that
can be found, and applies beautifully in almost every
instance.

And

And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

The time, the glorious time will come when all things shall be willingly subject to the Son of God, and shall submit to his controul: as has been, I think, plainly proved in the foregoing course of Lectures. When this event takes place, and there is not an enemy remaining in all the universe, then shall the Son of God deliver up the kingdom to the Father, in the most grand, glorious, and honourable manner, and be himself also subject to him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

Some are apt to say, that if Christ should resign the kingdom to the Father, and become subject to him that put all things under him, that his character would be thereby lowered and brought down. But I must declare that I think quite the reverse; even that his character will be exalted in the highest and most glorious manner. For let me ask any one, When did Joseph appear to most advantage? whether when he had the government of Egypt committed to his hands, and went forth invested with absolute authority over the whole land? or when after sustaining that high office for twice seven years, and doing all things well, to the full content of both the king and the people, he came loaded with honour and glory, and resigned the government of Egypt again to Pharaoh, who had given it to him?

When

When he went forth he was glorious, but when he had finished his work how much more glorious and honourable did he appear?—or to mention a recent instance, fresh in the memory of man, When did *General Washington* appear most grand and exalted? when the command of the American army was given to him by the free choice of the people? or when after eight years enduring the fatigues of war, and taking part with his soldiers in all their dangers and sufferings, and beholding his labours and designs crowned with success, he came amidst the acclamations of the people, and resigned his great and weighty commission to that august body from whom he received it?—Was he less loved honoured and esteemed by all the people when he laid down than when he received the important trust? Nay, was he not much more so? How much superior did he appear in that awful day than he had ever done before in any period of his life! But what are either of these instances, though grand and glorious in themselves, compared with the astonishing event and overpowering subject on which I am treating? Is it possible for imagination itself, in its utmost stretch, on its most lofty and towering wing, to conceive the glory and majesty of that great day, far remote, and distant from human view, and only known to JEHOVAH, when Christ the Son of God, having subdued, humbled, gathered together in one, or re-headed, re-conciled
and

and restored all things; and having compleatly finished the great work that he undertook, shall approach the sacred throne of the Father, attended by the countless millions of his redeemed and reconciled creatures, and resigning the kingdom into his hands who gave him power over all things, shall assume with awful dignity a new character, which is expressed by the Apostle, by being also himself subject to him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all?

I have ventured far already, but cannot feel myself willing to quit the subject, without once more endeavouring to represent its beauties in the form of a speech, which I trust will not be altogether unworthy of the Son of God to utter in the presence of his Father, and all the heavenly hosts on that resplendent day.

Speech of the King of kings and Lord of lords, upon his resigning his Imperial Dignity to God the Father having forever put down all rule and authority and power.

‘ My Father and my God, behold me, and the
‘ numerous children which thou hast given me, as the
‘ reward of my labour, and the fruit of my pain. I
‘ have at length subdued all my enemies, and brought
‘ them freely and heartily to submit to my sceptre.
‘ Long and severe was the struggle, and many that
‘ loved me doubted whether I should ever so far prevail
‘ as to bring my greatest enemies to be my
‘ friends;

‘ friends ; but I have succeeded according to thy will,
‘ and thy glorious purposes. Thou didst create all
‘ to glorify thy name, to enjoy thy love, and to
‘ be happy in beholding the light of thy counte-
‘ nance, and when some of thy creatures fell from
‘ their first estate, thou didst appoint me to reclaim
‘ and restore them.

‘ Father, the long expected time is at last arrived,
‘ when thy Son, having accomplished thy designs,
‘ approaches thy throne to resign his kingdom to
‘ thee. Thou didst give him power over all, and
‘ he hath given eternal life to all which thou gavest
‘ him. All that thou O Father, gavest me, have at
‘ length willingly returned unto me, and behold I
‘ present them before thee this day, reconciled to
‘ thee, to me, and to each other. See, my Father,
‘ and behold throughout this mighty throng, there
‘ is not one knee but what bows in the most cordial
‘ manner, not a tongue but is ready to shout thy
‘ praise, nor an heart that doth not overflow with
‘ love to thee. All are thy willing and obedient
‘ subjects, reclaimed from all their evil ways, and
‘ for ever confirmed in the purest habits of good-
‘ ness. Look, my Father, through the wide extended
‘ universe, (for thou beholdest all thy works in every
‘ situation with the utmost ease) see, there is not one
‘ rebellious creature to be found ! Where sin once
‘ reigned and abounded, grace now reigns and
‘ abounds much more. All confusion and disorder
‘ now

‘ now destroyed, the whole creation exhibits one
‘ grand scene of peace, harmony, and divine order.
‘ All creatures are now wholly delivered from the
‘ bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty
‘ of the children of God. All things in the uni-
‘ verse are gathered together in one, are reconciled
‘ unto thy government, and conformed to thine
‘ image, and shall never more go astray. Sin, sor-
‘ row, crying, pain and death shall never more be
‘ known in thy extensive empire. Thou shalt be
‘ all and in all. Thy subjects no longer need a Me-
‘ diator, they are all righteous and holy, and capable
‘ of beholding thy face with joy. I have seen the
‘ travail of my soul, and am for ever satisfied. Thou
‘ hast fulfilled all thy promises to me in the com-
‘ pleatest manner, I have also performed my words
‘ to all my people, whom I have redeemed to thee,
‘ and from this day resign them to thee. Now they
‘ are all one, as thou Father and I are one: one
‘ spirit rules in them all, they have all the same
‘ designs, even to glorify thy name, and promote
‘ the happiness of each other.

‘ Thou art now ALL IN ALL and let all thy
‘ works praise thee.

‘ Thy glory shall endure for ever, thou shalt re-
‘ joice in all thy works. This is the scene which
‘ compleats that joy which was set before me, for
‘ which I endured the cross, despising the
‘ shame.

‘ To

“ To this bright and glorious day I directed my
“ view: I beheld all things put under me I saw be-
“ yond the darkness and obscurity of sin, pain, and
“ death, the glorious day of light arise on all thy
“ creatures.

“ It is come, it is come, this is the day that I
“ looked for. The night is for ever past, and eter-
“ nal day is risen upon all creation, to set no more.
“ Shout, O Heavens, it is done, it is done. Let all
“ creatures adore thee, for this is the display of thy
“ glorious, wise, and gracious designs.

“ Thou didst intrust me with the execution of thy
“ wonderful plan, and this I have completed.
“ Henceforth I resign the kingdom to thee; be thou
“ thyself the Lord over all.

“ In my whole process I have always been an ex-
“ ample to all my flock, of which I am still and shall
“ remain the Shepherd and head, I will therefore
“ now shew an example to all thy creatures that shall
“ never be forgotten, which shall for ever confirm
“ thy authority over them; behold, I lay my sceptre
“ and my crown at thy feet, and profess before all
“ the hosts of heaven, and the numerous armies that
“ acknowledge my sway, that great and mighty as I
“ am, I am subject unto thee. I bow myself before
“ thine awful throne, I submit to thee as all thy
“ creatures have voluntarily submitted to me. Be-
“ hold me as the head of all principality and power,
“ and

‘and with me behold all thy creatures submit and
‘bow to thy sovereign sway.’

Here the scene of divine revelation closes, GOD
IS ALL IN ALL. I can go no further. The asto-
nishing subject drinks up all my spirits! I am lost
and swallowed up in the vast unbounded ocean of
love!

O let my soul absorbed be

While God doth me surround!

As a small drop in the vast sea

Is lost, and can't be found!

“Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reign-
“eth;” and he shall reign for ever and ever. Amen.

END OF THE FOURTH AND LAST VOLUME.

TO THE SUBSCRIBERS.

DEAR FRIENDS,

Through the good providence of God over me, and your cheerful assistance (which I shall always remember with gratitude) I have at length finished my Course of Lectures on the Prophecies. Two years have now elapsed since the publication of the first number; though at first I thought to have published one number every fortnight, but through a variety of circumstances, which I need not mention, the work has been much retarded. However I hope it will prove no damage in the end, as that thereby more time has been allowed for the perusal of each number before the publication of the next.

The Lectures in the two first volumes were written before they were delivered in publick, and consequently they are exactly as you heard them, but those in the third and fourth volumes were delivered extempore, and were not written until a considerable time afterwards, and therefore cannot be expected to be verbatim as they were spoken, but I trust they have lost nothing by after thoughts.

The substance of this Course of Lectures has been twice delivered: the first time in Chapel Court in the Borough, on thirty week evenings, beginning in Feb. and ending June 1788. The second time on forty five Sunday evenings, beginning in Feb. 1789, and ending June 1790.

There were frequent intermissions in the delivery; owing to my being sometimes in the country, and sometimes preaching on other subjects.

The Lecture on the Destruction of Babylon was never delivered in publick, and I have omitted the recapitulation of the Lectures at the end, partly, because there is a recapitulation of the two first volumes at the end of the second volume, but chiefly, because after so grand and solemn a close as the Son's delivering up the Mediatorial kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all, (which is properly the closing scene of prophecy) I was unwilling to add any thing more, and chose upon the maturest consideration, to close the happy scene where the Scripture closes it, when light, peace, and joy, shall burst forth upon the whole Creation, never more to be succeeded by darkness, pain, or misery; and God, who is perfect unbounded love, shall be *all in all* throughout the wide extended universe.

Hoping you will all have as much pleasure in reading as I have had in writing, I bid you an affectionate Farewel, and subscribe myself, your hearty Friend, and Servant in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

ELHANAN WINCHESTER.

London May 3d. 1791.

